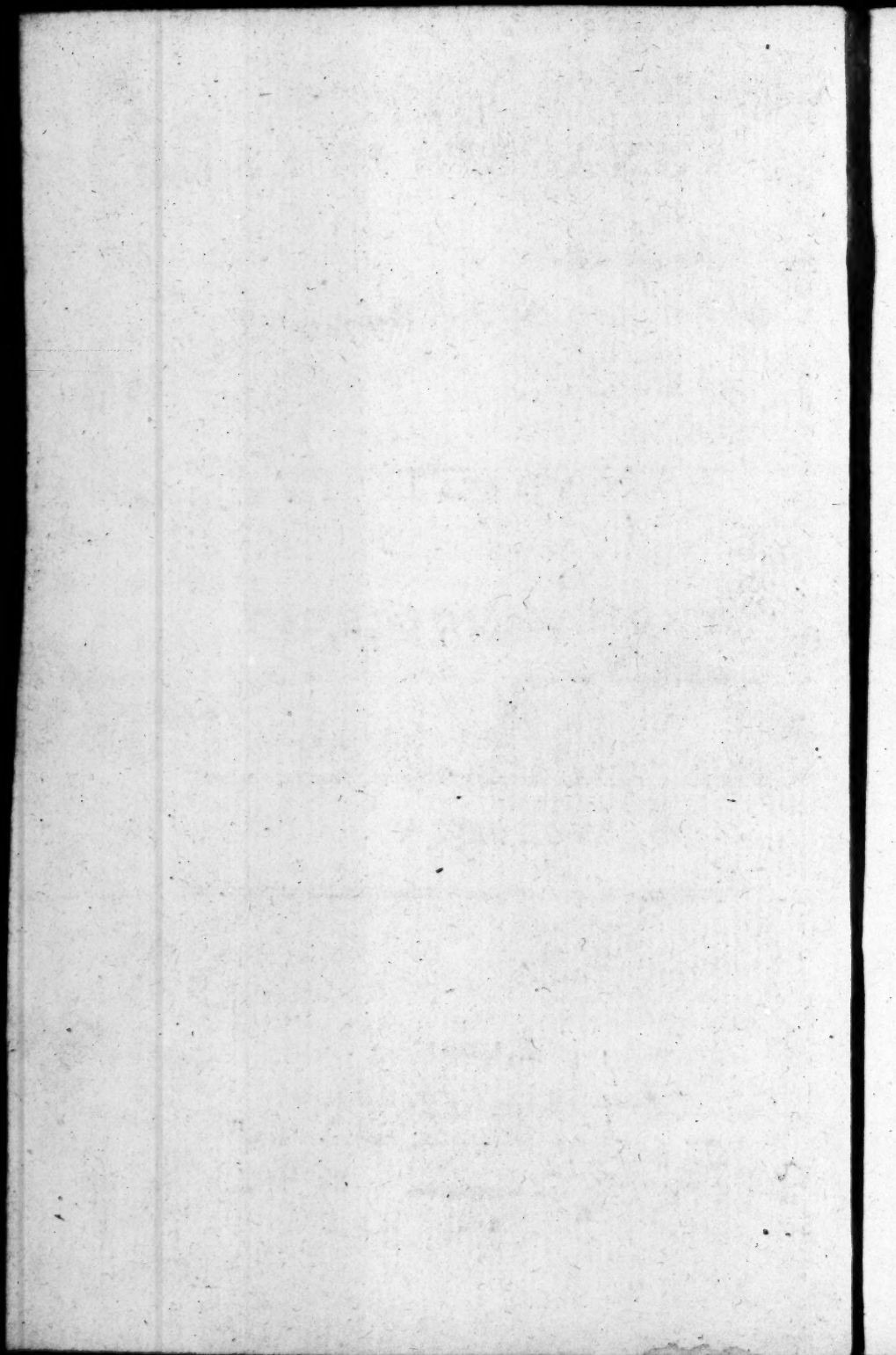


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A NOVEL.



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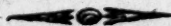
BY

THOMAS HOLCROFT.

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ANNA ST. IVES:

A NOVEL.

LETTER CVI.

COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

London, Dover Street.

JOIN chorus and rejoice with me, Fairfax, for I feel something like a transient hilarity of heart. I think I am half in a temper to tell my tale as it ought to be told. Time was when it would have been pregnant with humour.

The very master-devil that I wanted has appeared to me, and we have signed and consigned ourselves over to the great work of mutual vengeance! Be patient and you shall hear the manner of it.

Two nights ago I was at the theatre. The king was there ; Garrick played ; the crowd was great, and no places were to be procured. During the first act I and two more stood elbowing each other at the door of one of the front boxes, the seats of which were all full. The person who was next me was hard-favoured, had a look of audacious impudence, with that mixture of dress which forms the vulgar genteel, and spoke the brogue.

The act being over the audience rose, and my gentleman, with the nonchalance assurance of his character, a total disregard of the feelings and convenience of others, and an entire complaisance for his own, stepped forward into the second seat from the door, on which there were previously four people, its full complement. But he had noticed they were not all so athletic as himself, and was determined to make them sit close.

The persons next him, observing his redoubtable look, hesitated for a moment, but at length began to remonstrate. They
addressed

addressed him two or three times without his deigning to appear to hear them ; till, either encouraged by his silence or warmed by vexation, they spoke loud enough to call the attention of the people around them.

The Hibernian then sat himself down, threw his arm over the railing of the box, and his body in a careless posture, and very coolly answered—" Pray now be asy, " and don't disturb the good company."

A squabble ensued, and the Irishman continued to answer them with the utmost contempt. In a short time two of them gained courage enough to threaten to turn him out ; to which he replied—" Oh ! By " the sweet Jafus, but I should be glad to " see the pretty boy that would dare to " lay a little finger upon me !"

After another wrangle, and treating their reasonings and half menaces with the most contemptuous disregard, a gentleman from the next box interfered, and observed it certainly was very improper behaviour. The Irishman turned round, surveyed him

from head to foot, and answered—"I find
" you have all got your quarrelling tackle
" on board to-night; and so as I must fight
" somebody, and as you, mister, appear
" to be the most of a gentleman, why I
" will talk to you when the play is over.
" For which raison sit down, and make
" all yourselves asy."

The beginning of the second act and the impatience of the house to hear their favourite soon imposed silence, and the Irishman kept his seat.

I was so much diverted by the complete impudence of the fellow, that though one of the box-keepers had found me a place, I determined to return, and see how this petty brawl was to end. Accordingly I took care to be round in time, before the curtain dropped; till which the hero of it had kept quiet possession of his usurped seat.

The moment the audience rose he turned about, and with a look which I imagine no man but himself could assume, first on this side of him and next on that, addressed

ressed his opponents with—" Now if any
" of you are still disordered in the body,
" and want to lose a little blood, why
" follow me."

The two persons that sat next to him were both Jews, and one of them who appeared to have the most spirit had a knotted crab-stick in his hand, and insisted that the Irishman should not leave the company till he had first given satisfaction for the insult he had committed on them all. The Hibernian replied—" All?
" Is it all together you mane, or one after
" another? Perhaps you don't understand
" the tools of a gentleman, and want to box
" me! Faith and I should have no great
" objection to that either, with any half
" dozen of you, one down and t'other
" come on. But you must use no unlawful weapons, my sweet fellow."

So saying, he wrested the Jew's crab-stick from him, laid hold of it at each end, and snapped it in two across the railing of the box; adding with infinite composure of countenance—" This is an improper

“ plaything for you, master Jackey, and
“ you might do yourself a damage with
“ it. Here is half a crown for you. Take
“ it, man, and buy yourself a genteel bit
“ of rattan, to beat the little pug dogs
“ away, when they bark after you in the
“ street.”

Insolent as the fellow was, there was no resisting his humour, and the laugh was general. The vexed Israelite endeavoured to persist, and the Irishman drew a dirty letter out of his pocket, from the back of which he tore the direction, and giving it to the angry Jew, said—“ If you have
“ any stomach for a good breakfast to-morrow morning, I shall be at home;
“ and the hot rolls and butter will be
“ ready at ten.”

He then strode over the seats and went into the lobby, where he was followed by the crowd.

My curiosity was highly excited, and I requested the Jew to let me read his address.

Imagine, Fairfax, my surprise at seeing the

the name of Mac Fane! That is, of the gambler and bully who some time ago had been attempting to plunder brother Edward; and who had been so successfully opposed by the family knight-errant, Henley! Among the busy conjectures of my fermenting brain concerning the instruments I might happen to want, should things as they have done come to an extremity, the supposed qualifications of this hero had more than once passed in review. The behaviour to which I had this evening been a witness perfectly confirmed all my former conjectures, which I instantly recollected; I therefore determined not to lose sight of him.

Before I knew who he was I had been glad to see the squabble continued, because it drew out the strong traits of this very eccentric genius; but I grew impatient to put an end to it the moment I had made the discovery.

The thing was not difficult. His character was too desperate and determined not to inspire fear; and the humour of his

phraseology and brogue made the laugh always on his side. The passions of his opponents counteracting each other died away. The farce was going to begin, and he advised them to "go, and not lose " full eighteen penny-worth out of their " five shillings."

Finding the morsel was too hard for their digestion, they took his advice and returned quietly to their seats: while he several times traversed the lobby, and looked first into one box and then into another, to let them see that there he was.

My resolution was formed, and I soon found an opportunity of falling into conversation with him; and as I took care that my tone should answer the intended purpose, he presently invited me to adjourn, and take what he called a bottle and a bird at the Shakespeare.

The proposal exactly suited me, and away we went.

He called for a private room, which I should have done if he had not, though with a very different view. My appearance

ance made him hope he had caught a gudgeon. He presently began to turn the discourse upon various kinds of gaming. Billiards, tennis, hazard; and pass-dice, were each of them mentioned; and, to encourage him, I gave him to understand I knew them all. He then talked of cards, and asked if I had any objection to take a hand at picquet; "just to pass away an hour before supper." I answered none.

Accordingly the waiter was rung for, and the cards were presently upon the table.

He proposed playing for a trifle; from one guinea to five: not more; "because as why, he was tied up from deep play. He had lost five thousand pounds within six weeks, and they had had a pretty pigeon of him!—[Had you but seen the form and features of this pigeon, Fairfax!]" For which raison he must take care and not be plucked any more. It was the misfortune of his timper not to know when to stop; and there was not so

“unlucky a fillow in the three kingdoms.
“He was always the bubble, play at
“what he would, and every snap-jack
“knew him to be his mark.”

Such was the lesson which this fellow had got by rote, and had been retailing to all comers for years. But I have observed of gamblers that they cannot forbear rehearsing their own cant even in the company of each other, and when they are convinced every soul that hears them knows they are lying.

I however had my purpose to serve, and we sat down to our game. The stakes were five guineas a side. According to custom, I won the three or four first games; and he pretended to curse, and fret, and again ran over his bead-roll of being pigeoned, plucked bare, bubbled, done up, and the whole catalogue of like genteel phrases.

The first game he won he proposed, as luck was perhaps taking a turn in his favour, to double the stakes, and I indulged him. He suffered me to win the following
game.

game. I say suffered, cheating being taken into the account ; for I am certain that at the fair game I am his master. But that is no matter.

The three following games were all his own, and he then began to repeat the remainder of his part. “ By the blissed Jesus he would not believe his own eyes ! “ Three games together ! ” The fellow swore, with one of the deepest oaths his memory could furnish, such a thing had never happened to him before in his whole life ! “ But now that he was in luck, he “ would as soon play for a hundred guineas as for a thirteener.”

He endeavoured to provoke me to increase the stake ; and, by the supper not coming up, I am convinced the waiter and he understood each other, and that the signal had been given. I refused to play for a greater sum, and we continued till he had won fifty guineas, he incessantly swearing—“ By the blissed crook ! By the “ hind leg of the holy lamb ! By Saint “ Peter’s pretty beard ! ” and by all man-

ner of oaths, some of them of the most whimsical, and others of the most horrible kind, that he had never been a winner so much before in all his life. From the first ten guineas that he won to the last it was still the same tune.

I then rang the bell and ordered supper, thinking the sum sacrificed quite sufficient; though not more than enough to serve my purpose.

While we were eating, he endeavoured by all the arts he knew to excite the passion of gaming in me; and he is a tolerable adept. But my mind was too intent upon another subject. I watched the moment when he was at the height of his hopes, which I had purposely encouraged to produce my intended effect, and then asked him if he did not know Captain St. Ives?

Impudent as the fellow is, his countenance for a moment was fixed, his mouth open, and his eye struggling to get rid of alarm, that it might begin its enquiries. I followed up my blow by adding—

You

You won three thousand guineas of him, I think, Mr. Mac Fane, which I am told were never paid.

The fellow put his hand into a side-pocket, which he had in the body of his coat. I instantly suspected he had a small pair of pistols there, and my suspicions were afterward confirmed. He drew it back, having satisfied himself that they were actually forth-coming, and then recovered himself so far as to ask—

Pray, sir, are you acquainted with Captain St. Ives?—

I am, sir, answered I—I likewise know Mr. Henley.

You do, sir? said the astonished Mac Fane.

I do, sir. I am intimate with Sir Arthur St. Ives, and he is the son of his gardener: a low fellow, that acts as the baronet's man of all work; his steward, his overseer, and his cash-keeper.

This contempt thrown on the character of Henley gave the Irishman some relief. By the holy poker, said Mac Fane, but I
always

always thought he was a spalpeen, and no gentleman !

I think you have no great cause to like him much, sir, continued I, from the account that I have heard.

His choler began to rise, and his eyes assumed an uncommon ferocity. Like him ! Sweet Jafus snatch me out of the world if I don't pay off an old score with him yet, before I die.

I thought as much, sir, answered I.

Sir ! Replied he, again staring with reviving alarm and suspicion—

I continued.—To tell you the truth, Mr. Mac Fane, that is the very subject which brought you and I into company this evening. I suspected your hate of Henley, and to be sincere I hate him too.

Had you seen the fellow's face brighten, Fairfax, and after brightening begin to flame, you would not have readily forgotten the picture.

But I am rather surprised to meet you in public, sir, added I.

What do you mane by that, sir ?

I thought

I thought you deemed it prudent to keep out of the way, on account of that affair?

I felt some gratification in playing thus upon his fears—He now once more put his hand into his side-pocket, and pulling out his pistols laid them before him. By Jafus, sir, I don't very well know what you would be at! But when I understand the full tote of your questions, I shall know how to give an answer.

I could not very well digest this oblique menace; but to have quarrelled with such a rascal would in every sense have been madness. You have a well-mounted pair of pistols there, said I, Mr. Mac Fane. I'll bet you the fifty guineas, double or quit, I break this china plate at the first shot, ten paces distant.

By the great grumbler, answered he, but I'll bet you don't! Immediately delivering me one pistol, and taking up and unlocking the other himself. Accordingly I placed the plate against the wall, fired, and was not far from the centre. Upon
my

my honour and soul, fir, said Mac Fane, but I find you are a good shot, and I shall be glad to be better acquainted with you.

Having convinced him that I could hit a mark as well as himself, I returned to the subject of Henley; and though I could not bring him to be explicit, I learned from him that he was acquainted with Henley's aversion to prosecute, but does not know on what that aversion is founded. Beside which he confides in a want of witnesses, as I could perceive: except that he has some fear of his accomplice, Webb; a man in whose company this very Mac Fane once attempted to rob Sir Arthur, and whom I suspect he would impeach, but that it would ruin all his gambling views. For he has found means of associating with that whole class of young fools of fortune, whose perverted education leads them to take pleasure in the impudence and humour of such a fellow, as well as in seeing each other stripped and ruined by turns; but who would never admit him as a companion, did they know he had been guilty
of

of an act so desperate as that of going on the highway. Scarcely any thing short of this can expel such a fellow from such society.

But though he thinks himself secure in consequence of the lenity of Henley, he hates him as sincerely as if he were pursuing him to the gallows. The loss of the three thousand guineas is one great motive; and another is that he felt he was out-braved by Henley, whom he could not terrify, but who on the contrary terrified him.

I found he had even formed a scheme of petty vengeance, which was to waylay Henley with some bruising fellows of his acquaintance, for he is acquainted with daring villains of all descriptions, one of whom was to insult, provoke him to fight, and beat him, while Mac Fane himself should keep at some distance, disguised.

It was with some difficulty I could persuade him to desist from this plan, and join in projects of my own. But at last however he was convinced that to rob him of
his

his mistress, and awaken him from all his dreams of imaginary bliss to the torture I am preparing, would be more effectual revenge than a paltry beating. Not to mention that I firmly believe, instead of being beaten, he would conquer the best prize-fighter they could bring ; for he is really a powerful and extraordinary fellow.

But you will perceive, Fairfax, I was obliged to inform him of a part of my own views ; and that I might fix him I determined to bid high. I told him I had Henley and another person to secure ; and that if he would aid me himself and provide other assistants to act under his directions, without seeing or being informed of me, I would give him a thousand guineas as soon as all this should be perfectly accomplished. And, as an earnest of my generosity, I put down the fifty guineas ; saying that the wager I had made with him was not a fair one, for that it was fifty guineas to a straw in my favour : he had no chance of winning.

He was quite satisfied with my offer,
strengthened

strengthened as it was by the gratification of his own passions. I told him what a puissant hero Henley is, and of the necessity of coming upon him by surprise. I told him I had seen a house, as before described, beyond Knightsbridge, which pleased me; but that I could not find another near enough, in which to secure Henley.

The geography of the place I mentioned seemed to start an idea in his mind, and he told me, if I would meet him in two days at the same tavern, he would in the mean time not only make preparations and procure assistants, but perhaps bring me further intelligence. As the fellow's brain seemed busy, I did not wish to rob him of the self-satisfaction of invention, and we accordingly parted, making the appointment he proposed.

Of all existing beings, he perhaps was the only one who could in a country like this become the proper instrument of my revenge. And yet, Fairfax, he is a hateful fellow! His language, his looks, his manners,

manners, his passions, are all hateful! Courage excepted, there is not a single trait in him but what is abominable! He delights in talking of hocking men, chalking them, and cutting them down! Every time his anger rises against any one, these are its attendant ideas. Such a fellow must come to some tragical end. He can never die of old age, and scarcely of disease. Nothing but the lead and steel in which he delights can end him.

So it is, and I have no remedy. But he shall be to me no more than an implement, with which I will carve the coming banquet.

How minute are the chances and events on which we depend! A few slight alterations of incident, and how different would have been the train of my thoughts! She might have been happy with me, for I loved her, Fairfax, I loved her. I feel it more and more; and were but circumstances a little more favourable, I believe I should turn about and take a contrary path.

But

But it cannot be ! The barrier is insurmountable ! An adamantine wall, reaching to the skies ! I remember what she said, at her proud uncle's table—" I have " an abhorrence, Mr. Clifton, of the errors in which you are now indulging."—Abhorrence was the word, Fairfax !—It has been at my tongue's end ever since—And when she talked of my errors she meant me.—" I ultimately and determinedly renounce all thought of him !"—This was her language ! I knew before which way her heart went ; and can I suppose, now she has got a fair excuse, that she will not profit by it ? Oh no ! I am not so ill read as that in the passions. But I have said the word—They shall never come together !—They never, never shall !

C. CLIFTON.

LETTER

LETTER CVII.

COKE CLIFTON.

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

London, Dover Street.

I HAVE received your dissuasive epistle, Fairfax. It found me moody and did not contribute to make me merry. To own the truth, no ghost need rise to tell me the methods I use are inclined to the violent. Can you find me better? Nay can you find any other? I care not for the consequences; I brave them all.

Time was that I could have been happy with her! Ay and should, but for this fiend Henley. He sleeps securely! Let him sleep on! I will soon awaken him!

I thought I should have been tortured but by one chief passion, and that the love
of

of vengeance would have enveloped me wholly : but they are all devouring me by turns. I certainly hate her, and him I abhor. Yet pictures of imaginary happiness, that might have been, are continually rising, and vanishing in gloomy regret.— He too, at the very moment that I could murder him, I am obliged to admire !

Still he shall not have her ! Though death overtake him, her and me, he shall not have her ! But what is death ? A thing to covet, not to dread. 'Tis existence only that is hateful !—Would that my bones were now mouldering !—Why have I brains and nerves and sensibilities ?—Oh that I were in the poisonous desert, where I might gulp mephitic winds and drop dead ; or in a moment be buried in tornados of burning sand ! Would that my skull were grinning there, and blanching ; rather than as it is consciously parching, scorched by fires itself has kindled !

I spent all yesterday with that Irish scoundrel.

scoundrel. Malignity is his element, and mischief his delight ! I suspect by his affidavit that he is poor just at present ; for a more industrious demon black Cocytus does not yield. He is already provided with associates, and has found another principal agent for the great work. It is a strange expedient ! But these are strange fellows ! And yet it is a lucky one ; superior to any that I had projected.

When I mentioned the Knightsbridge road at our first interview, Mac Fane recollected that an intimate of his had just set up what was to him a new trade, in the neighbourhood ; that of being the keeper of a madhouse. He determined to go and propose the business to him ; and as the fellow was preparing to advertise for lunatics, but had not yet got a single patient, there was a complete opening for such a plan.

He proposed taking me to see this intended guardian of maniacs, and his house ; and I ordered a post-chaise for that purpose, that I might hide myself in one corner

ner of it, and not let a living soul detect me with such a companion.

As we were going, I enquired if this keeper were an Irishman? He took offence, and retorted—"What did I mane
" by an Irishman? Becase he is a rogue
" you think he is an Irishman! By the
" holy carpenter you need not come to
" Ireland for that kind of ware! You
" have a viry pritty breed of rogues of
" your own! But he is not Irish. He is
" one of your own sulky English bugs."

The description was not inapplicable, for I think I never beheld a more lowering, black-browed, evil-eyed fellow, since the hour I first saw light. He had all the gloom of the most irascible bull-dog, but without his generous courage. He seemed more proper to make men mad than cure them of madness. But he had two excellent qualities for my purpose; poverty and a disposition to all ill.

I am got into excellent company! But I care not! I will on! All this seems as if it were but the prologue to the trage-

dy. But be it that, or be it what it will — I care nothing for myself ; and I have little cause to care more for them. She never had any mercy on me ; and least this last interview, when I was pleading before her pompous uncle.

I have been obliged to hold consultations with these Satanic rascals, to concert ways and means. The most secure we have been able to devise, relative to Henley, is to have a straight waistcoat, to come upon him suddenly, and to encrust him in it before he shall know what we are about. This with a gag will make him safe. But there must not be less than four fellows, and those stout ones. Nothing must be left to chance.

Three more must be provided for the lady, of whom Mac Fane himself proposes to be one. But he means to keep out of sight of Henley, till he is in custody.

I have various preparations yet to make. Mac Fane is to go and hire me the empty house to-morrow. It is furnished ; but it must be aired, for I would not have her die

die a paltry catch-cold death. I would treat her like a gentlewoman in every respect but one ; and, in that I will have as little compassion on her as she has had on me.

It might have been otherwise ! I came to her a generous lover ! I saw her and was amazed at her beauties, captivated by her enchanting manners, soothed by her unvaried sweetness ! But this sweetness she has turned to gall ! I adored her, and was prepared eternally to adore ! But injury followed injury in such quick succession that apathy itself called aloud for vengeance !

I own it is true what she said at her uncle's, that I made a resolution not to marry her. But what were my resolutions ? She herself could not but feel she had the power to break them all. But she had not the will, Fairfax ! It rankles there ! She hates me, and what is more damnable she loves another !

I must turn my thoughts again to this detested mad-house man, and the scenery around it. All the avenues must be examined, and all the bye-paths and open roads that lead toward both houses inspected, that Mac Fane and his emissaries may make no blunder. I will if possible keep out of the action, but I will be near at hand.

I have a secret wish, the moment all is over, to fly the odious scene ; for horribly odious it will be : but it would have the appearance of cowardice. It must end tragically ! Not even the poor creatures who stand in the place of her natural guardians, tame as they are, can suffer such an insult. Yet which of them dare look me in the face, and call himself my enemy ? And, after injuring her, shall I hesitate at trampling upon them ?

I must feel my heart, Fairfax, when I go to the encounter ; must recapitulate all my wrongs. I have them noted down severally as they occurred ! I need but read to rage ! What do I talk ?—Read?—

Can

Can I forget them? No; night nor day! They are my familiars. They wake with me, sleep with me, walk with me, ride with me, glower with me, curse with me—but never smile with me. They are become my dearest intimates. I cherish and hug them to my heart! Their biting is my only pleasure!

I cannot forget this keeper. He is foul-faced fellow! Has a wry look; a dogged, dungeon hue; of the deepest dusk and progeny of Beelzebub! I wonder by whom, where, and why such fellows are begotten!

There are horrid villains in the world! Villains by trade; that never felt the strong impulse of high-minded passion; that could breakfast in an hospital, dine in a slaughter-house, and sup in the sanguinary field of battle, listening to the groans of the mangled; or toss them on the points of forks, to smelt in a heap! I have heard her talk something of these depraved natures, and of the times when they are all to be humanised. Can you conjecture when, Fair-

fax? Yet she said they should be, and I was half inclined to believe her.

C. CLIFTON.

P. S. I meant to notice that passage in your letter in which you mention Beaunoir; but I forgot it till this moment. So you are at last inclined to think Anna St. Ives must be something more than you every day meet, from the rapturous description of that rodomontade Count? After all I have written, your faith wanted the seal of such a lunatic? Had you forgotten that the time was when I would have married her? And did that say nothing?

The Count is preparing for England! Let him come! I remember one of his crazy phrases and claims was that he would be her champion, should ever base knight attempt to do her harm. Nor have I forgotten his intended visit, received by Henley. May the winds set fair and blow him quickly over! Should he have any such frolics in his brain, we shall not be long in coming to terms.

This

This Mac Fane is incessantly importuning me to play, and what is strange has several times excited the desire in me. I took up the dice box, after we had been to the mad-house, and threw half a dozen casts at hazard ; but I soon found it was in vain, and checked myself. I know I have the command of my own temper in that respect.

I have been reading over this tedious homily, and find it most ineffably dull.— But what is to be done ? My gaiety is gone. My high spirits are converted into black bile. My thoughts are hellebore and deadly night-shade, and hilarity is for ever poisoned.

LETTER CVIII.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

LOUISA CLIFTON.

London, Grosvenor Street.

HAVE I been unjust to the brother of my friend? Or had my words the power over him to turn him from a guilty purpose?—Well; rather, ay infinitely rather let me be a false accuser than he culpable! He seeks me no more, offers not to molest me, and I hope has forgotten me; at least has seen the error of endeavouring to accomplish a purpose so criminal by means so base. I expected storms, but a sweet calm has succeeded that seems to portend tranquillity and happiness.

With respect to me and Frank, our union appears to be hastening to a conclusion.

sion. Sir Arthur, impelled forward by his hopes and fears, proceeds though reluctantly to act contrary to the wishes of my arrogant uncle. Mrs. Wenbourne is dissatisfied; but her opposition is feeble, for Edward is reconciled to the match; having no other motive but the acquisition of a sum of money for his consent to dock the entail; and of the manner in which this sum will be squandered we have already had sufficient proof.

I understand Lord Fitz-Allen affects to credit a report of a very ridiculous, though as some would think it of a very injurious nature; which is that there was a collusion between Frank Henley and Mac Fane, respecting my brother's gambling affair. The circumstances necessary to render this probable are so violent as immediately to expose its absurdity, and to make it matter of amazement how such an assertion could be invented, or circulated.

What could be Frank's motive?—My wife uncle has his answer ready—"That

“ of imposing upon the family in order to
“ marry me.”

And what Mac Fane’s? “ A bribe” is
a short phrase, and soon said.

I imagine it to be some dream of my
uncle’s, who has an aptitude for this kind
of invention; and who having once put a
few incidents together that seem to agree,
persuades himself with great facility that
the fable he has created is fact. Petty
calumny like this is wholly incapable of
moving Frank Henley.

The restless crafty Abimelech has pre-
vailed on Sir Arthur to go down with him
to Wenbourne-Hill. He well knows how
much his own power will be increased by
the old habits of Sir Arthur, and the ease
with which they can be revived by this his
interested abettor. Not but I am well
convinced, when once every thing shall be
settled, and he have no longer any thing
to fear from the opposition of Sir Arthur,
he will be as little a friend to improving as
any of us. Various hints which have drop-
ped from him would have proved this to
Sir

Sir Arthur, had he not been blind enough to suppose that, he being a baronet, honest Aby is bound ever to remain his most obedient slave and steward; forgetting the proofs he has received that Abimelech at present is more inclined to command than to obey; and that when he parts with money he must have what he calls the whys and the wherefores.

His confidence in Frank however is now so entire that he has entrusted the transaction of certain money business to him, necessary on the present occasion, which he came up purposely to negotiate himself, but which he is now convinced can be done full as prudently and safely by his son. But a few months ago, Frank tells me, he petitioned this father in vain for thirty pounds, who now commits thousands to his keeping.

Not but it is from a conviction that there is no propensity in Frank to waste one of those guineas of which he is so enamoured. Without the least love of money, Frank is a rigid economist. The father indulges no

false wants because it would be expensive ; the son has none to indulge. Habits which in the one are the fruits of avarice, in the other are the offspring of wisdom.

Abimelech has some confused suspicion that Frank acts from higher motives than himself, and such as he does not understand ; but still he hopes they are all founded on his own favourite basis, the love of hoarding. Nor can he very well persuade himself that this love is not the grand mover with all men of sense, among whom he now ranks his son high.

But ah, Louisa, how different are the views of this worthy, this heavenly-gifted son ! He is anxiously studious to discover how he may apply the wealth that may revert to him most to benefit that society from which it first sprang. The best application of riches is one of our frequent themes ; because it will be one of our first duties. The diffusion of knowledge, or more properly of truth, is the one great good to which wealth, genius, and existence ought all to be applied. This noble purpose gives
birth

birth to felicity which is in itself grand, inexhaustible, and eternal.

How ineffable is the bliss of having discovered a friend like Frank Henley, who will not only pursue this best of purposes himself, but will through life conduct me in the same path, will aid my efforts to promote the great work, and, by a combination of those powers we happen to possess, will add energy to effort, and perhaps render it fifty fold more pervading and effective !

Husband and wife, parent and child are ties which at present claim, or rather extort a part of our attention. But oh, how poor, how insignificant are they, when compared to the claims of eternal justice ; which bind man to man in equal and impartial benevolence over the face of the whole earth, and render the wandering Arab, who is in need of aid or instruction from me, as truly my brother as the one my mother gave me.

I seem now but beginning the journey of life ; and to have found a companion,
guide,

guide, and consoler, like Frank Henley, is surely no common felicity! May the fates grant my Louisa just such another!

A. W. ST. IVES.

P. S. You do not think, Louisa, no I am sure you cannot think that all the ardour I felt for the recovery of a mind like Mr. Clifton's is lost. Far, far otherwise! I still hope to see him even more than my fondest reveries have imagined! But I am not the agent; or at least this is not the moment; or which is still more probable no agent now is wanted. His mind has been obliged to enquire, and though passion may for a time suppress truth, its struggles will be incessant; must be so in a mind of such activity, and must at last be victorious. The grand enemy of truth is the torpid state of error; for the beginning of doubt is always the beginning of discovery. Let us then continue to love this man of wonderful genius; not for what he is, but what he shall be.

LETTER CIX.

FRANK HENLEY

TO

OLIVER TRENCHARD.

London, Grosvenor-Street.

OH, Oliver, how fair is the prospect before me ! How fruitful of felicity, how abundant in bliss ! Yes, my friend, jointly will we labour, your most worthy father, you, I, Anna, her friend, and all the converts we can make to truth, to promote the great end we seek ! We will form a little band which will daily increase, will swell to a multitude, ay, till it embrace the whole human species !

Surely, Oliver, to be furnished with so many of the means of promulgating universal happiness is no small blessing. My feelings

ings are all rapture ! And yet if I know my heart, it is not because I have gained a selfish solitary good ; but because I live in an age when light begins to appear even in regions that have hitherto been thick darkness ; and that I myself am so highly fortunate as to be able to contribute to the great, the universal cause ; the progress of truth, the extirpation of error, and the general perfection of mind ! I and those dear friends I have named ; who are indeed dear because of their ardent and uniform love of virtue !

Neither, Oliver, are all our hopes of Clifton lost. Anna thinks, and so do I, that he has heard too much ever to forget it all : or rather that he has a mind so penetrating, and so eternally busy, that, having been once led to enquire, it is scarcely in the power of accident wholly to impede the progress of enquiry. And should accident be favourable, that progress would indeed be rapid ! By his intercourse with Anna his mind is become impregnated with the seeds of truth ; and surely the soil
is

is too rich for these seeds not to spring, bud, and bear a plenteous harvest. Ay, Oliver, fear not. It is not the beauty of the picture that seduces, but the laws of necessity, which declare the result for which we hope to be inevitable.

My present state of happiness meets some slight check from incidental circumstances, not in my power to guide. My father and Sir Arthur are doing what I believe to be a right thing, but from wrong motives. The prodigal Edward, from a very different avarice of enjoyment, is eager to dock the entail. The sum he is to receive will soon be squandered, and he will then be as eager to imagine himself treated with injustice; and will conceive himself left half to perish with want, if his accustomed dissipation be not supplied. But that it must not be. If we can teach him better we will; if not he must be left to repine and accuse, and we must patiently suffer the error which we cannot cure.

Lord Fitz-Allen indulges himself in thinking as much ill of me as he can, and
in

in speaking all he thinks. But this is indeed a trifle. I know that the mistakes of his mind, situated as he is, are incurable ; and to grieve or feel pain for what cannot be avoided is neither the act of wisdom nor of virtue.

F. HENLEY.

LETTER CX.

FRANK HENLEY
TO
OLIVER TRENCHARD.

London, Grosvenor-Street.

I DID not intend to have written again so soon, but an incident has occurred which perplexes all reasoning upon it, and again engenders doubt. It relates to Clifton.

I last night attended Anna to Covent-Garden playhouse, where about eight o'clock

o'clock I was obliged to leave her, having an appointment with some gentlemen in the city relative to my father's money affairs at that hour; which having settled, it was agreed I should return in the carriage for Anna before the play was ended, to conduct her home. Accordingly having met my men of business, whom on Friday next I am to meet again to receive eight thousand pounds, I drove back to Covent Garden.

It was then about ten o'clock. The coachman stopped at the Piazza. I alighted; but, as I was stepping out of the carriage, whom should I see but the gambler and highwayman, Mac Fane; linked arm in arm with Mr. Clifton! I was struck with amazement, as well I might be. A thousand confused doubts succeeded to each other, which I had neither time nor indeed power to unravel.

However it seemed to me almost impossible that Mr. Clifton should know the man, and suffer himself to be seen in public with such a character. For certainly a
want

want of self-respect is not one of the habitual mistakes of Mr. Clifton. I stopped some little time in this state of perplexity, but at last concluded it would be highly culpable in me to leave Mr. Clifton ignorant of the character of his acquaintance. They had gone toward King-street, and I hastened after them.

I soon came up with them, and addressing myself to Mr. Clifton, said—"Sir, it
" is incumbent on me to inform you of
" a particular of which I imagine you are
" ignorant. The name of the man you
" are in company with is Mac Fane.
" You have heard his history. He is the
" gambler who endeavoured to defraud
" Captain St. Ives of three thousand
" pounds."

I have before acquainted thee, Oliver, of the ferocious character of this Mac Fane; of which I have now had further proofs. I had scarcely finished my phrase before he replied, with one of his accustomed oaths—"You're a scoundrel and
" a liar"

“ a liar”—and immediately made a blow at me.

Being previously on my guard, and watchful of his motions, I stepped quickly back, and he missed me and reeled. This was in King-Street, where I overtook them.

I turned back, intending not to notice his insult ; but he was too much enraged to suffer me to escape, unless I had thought proper to run. He is a very muscular fellow, and confident of his own strength. No man could be more determined than I was to avoid so absurd a contest, had it been possible ; but it was not. He made several blows at me, two or three of which took effect, before I returned one of them. But finding that I must be obliged to beat him in order to get rid of him, and that there was absolutely no other mode, I began my task with all necessary determination.

The mob collected apace, and we were presently surrounded by passengers, waiters, chairmen, footmen, hackney-coachmen

men and link-boys. It was a strange disgusting situation; but it did not admit of a remedy. This fellow, Mac Fane, has studied the whole school of assault, and is a practised pugilist. When I was a boy thou knowest, Oliver, and before thy worthy father had taught me better, I was myself vain of my skill and prowess. I was not therefore the novice which he expected to have found. Not to mention, Oliver, that energy of mind, if it be real and true energy, is itself, without any such contemptible knowledge, sufficient to overcome the strongest efforts of tyranny.

Of this I presently made Mr. Mac Fane sensible. After the very first onset, he felt himself cowed; which increased his rage so much that he endeavoured to have recourse to the most malignant and cruel expedients to obtain victory. This obliged me to give him several hard and very dangerous blows, which I should otherwise have been cautious of doing, and

and the effects of which he will for some time continue to feel.

He fought however with great obstinacy, and in a manner which proved how much his ambition was wounded by being conquered. The mob, as in all such cases, chose different sides; but much the greatest part was for me. They several times saw the malicious and evil intentions of Mac Fane; and he once received a blow for them, from one of the assistants, which made him more guarded.

It is delightful to the philosopher to perceive how, even in error, justice struggles to shew itself. Those rules which are the laws of honour to the mob originate in this noble principle: and never is the infraction of justice more dangerous than at such moments, when the mind is awakened to full exertion.

Still it was a painful and degrading situation! Wert thou ever at the mercy of a mob? Didst thou ever feel the littleness of thy own faculties, when exerted to make a confused multitude act rationally,

at

at the very time that thou thyself wert apparently acting like a fool or a madman? If so, Oliver, thou canst conceive something of the contempt which I felt for myself, during this scene. Can a general, thinkest thou, if he be really a fit person to be a general, feel otherwise in the heat of battle? For I am mistaken if armies of the best disciplined men, brought into action, do not more or less become a mob. And added to this sense of imbecility, what must the general's feelings be the next morning, when he goes to view the wretched scene of his own making? Does he go to view it, thinkest thou, or does he shun the sight?—If he go he is a fiend; and if he stay away he is worse!

The battle being ended, and the rage of Mr. Fac Fane, though perhaps increased, obliged to restrain itself, there stood I, surrounded by my applauding admirers, suffering a thousand ridiculous interrogatories, and confined to the spot for the want of clothes! My hat and coat I had committed to one person, and my watch and purse
to

to another; taking it for granted the latter would have been stolen from me if I had not, as was actually the fact, for my breeches pockets were turned inside out. I had rightly concluded that the chances were more favourable in trusting to a person I should select, than to the honesty of a mob in the confines of Covent-Garden.

I was fortunate: the whole of my moveables again made their appearance; and it gave me great pleasure, because I had trusted my purse and watch to a poor fellow. The consciousness of his own honesty was a greater pleasure to him than the recompense he received from me; though I thought it my duty to reward him liberally. Beside he had seen me ill treated, and had conceived an affection for me, or more properly for the justice of my cause, and he rejoiced exultingly in my victory.

I escaped from the shouts and congratulations of my greasy well-meaning companions as fast as I could; and after a further delay of stepping into a coffee-house, to wash and adjust my appearance as well

as circumstances would permit, I joined Anna, who began to be alarmed, the play being over and the house almost empty.

I saw no more of Clifton. But that affords me no clue. If he were before unacquainted with Mac Fane, he would hasten from such a companion with vexation and contempt: and if the contrary, his chagrin at being seen by me would equally induce him to shun us. Mind, as I have always remarked, Oliver, and as I have before reasoned with thee relative to him, is slow in ridding itself of the habits of prejudice, even when prejudice itself seems to have ceased.

'Tis true that conjectures disadvantageous to Clifton have, when Anna and I were considering this incident, intruded themselves forcibly upon us: but they were only conjectures, and I hope ill founded. Indeed they are improbable; for Clifton could not knowingly league himself with a man like Mac Fane, except for purposes too black or too desperate for even passions so violent as his to entertain.

I know

I know mind to be capable of astonishing mistakes ; nor can I pretend, when I recollect the proofs on record, to say what are the boundaries of error ; nor indeed what are the boundaries of probability. But I think Clifton could not make himself the associate of Mac Fane !

I should pronounce more boldly still, but that I cannot conceive how it was possible for a character so legible and gross, as that of this gambler, to impose for a moment on Coke Clifton ; acquainted as he is with the world, and accustomed to detect and satirize what he understands to be absurdity ! I can only say, if he be proceeding in error so flagrant and deep as this, he is a man much to be feared, but more to be pitied.

F. HENLEY.

LETTER CXI.

COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

London, Dover Street.

AGAIN and again, Fairfax, this is an infernal world! A vile, disgusting, despicable, besotted ass of a world! Existence in it is not worth accepting; and the sooner we spurn it from us the better we shall assert our claim to the dignity and wisdom of which it is destitute.

How do I despise the blundering insolent scoundrel with whom I am linked! How despicable am I to myself!

I last night met the fellow again at the Shakespeare. Of all his dirty qualities, not one of them is so tormenting as his familiar

miliar impudence ! There is no repressing it except by cutting his throat ; a business at which he is always alert. Nothing delights him so much as to talk of extinguishing men, treading out their souls, feeding upon their life-time, and other strange revolting phrases, all of the same sanguinary fort.

Having consulted with him concerning the seizure of Anna and Frank, and concluded that the affair should be ended as speedily as possible, I wished to have shaken him off and retired : but the thing was impracticable. I do not choose that my own carriage should attend me on these expeditions ; and as it was a rainy night, I knew the difficulty of getting a coach. I therefore staid an hour till the entertainment should be begun, and the Piazzà probably more clear.

As there is no sitting in his company without some species of gaming, for his whole conversation, that subject excepted, consists of oaths, duels, and the impudent scoundrels he has put out of the world, I

took a few throws at hazard with him; and, as I was very careful to call for fresh dice and to watch his motions, I was a winner; hazard perhaps being the fairest of all games, if the dice be not foul. He ran over his usual litany of being pigeoned, and about ten o'clock I left play, and determined to fally forth; being apprehensive of engaging too deeply at the game, if I staid longer.

The moment we had descended the stairs he impudently laid hold of my arm. My blood boiled, Fairfax! Yet I was obliged to submit.

This was not all! The precautions I had taken were but a kind of presentiment of the vexation that was preparing for me. Just as we quitted the door of the tavern, who should bolt upon us but the hated Henley! I shook with the broad shame! My teeth gnashed curses! How willingly could I have pistoled him, Mac Fane, every being that eyed me, and still more willingly myself!

But there was nothing for it but to walk
on,

on, and seem not to see him. He however would not suffer me to depart without a double dose of damnation ! The same infernal officiousness, with which from the first moment he saw me to the last he has been seized, came upon him ; and though I hurried through the Piazza to escape, like a perjurer from the pillory, he pursued us purposely to inform me I was in company with a rascal, and to warn me of my danger.

I never can recollect my own situation, without an impulse to snatch up the first implement that would deprive me of a consciousness so detestable !

The irascible fury of the bully rid me of my tormentor ; he immediately assaulted Henley, and I hastened away from two beings so almost equally abhorrent, but from causes so opposite.

On the following evening, having another appointment with the gambling rascal, I took care to have a coach waiting, and to go muffled up and disguised as much as possible. But for once my

caution was superfluous. No Mac Fane appeared.

Not knowing what had happened, and it being night, and I thus properly equipped, I resolved to drive to his lodgings.— Being there I sent up my name, and was admitted to the bed-chamber of this doughty exterminator of men. If the temper of my mind were not obnoxious to all cheerfulness, I could almost have laughed, the bully was so excellently beaten, mortified, and enraged! His head was bound up, his eyes were plaistered, his thumb sprained, his body of all colours, and his mind as hotly fevered as Alexander's itself could have been, had Alexander been vanquished at the battle of Issus!

His impatience to have Henley in his power is now almost phrensy; and it will be phrensy itself when he comes to find, as find he will, that though he can tie the hands of Henley his conquest must end there, and that the prisoner will still defy and contemn his jailor. So would I have him. Henley, though I hate, I cannot but respect

respect and admire. The other is a creature I detest myself for ever having known!

Yet who but he could have gratified the unabating burning passion of my heart!—I feel, Fairfax, as if I had taken my leave of hope, joy, and human intercourse! I have a quarrel with the whole race, for having been forced into existence and into misery! I have suffered an accumulation of disgrace, for which I can never pardon myself! And shall I permit the authors of it to live undisturbed in their insult and triumph over me? No, by hell, come of me what will! Lower I cannot be in my own esteem than I already am: tremble those who made me so!

Beating has but rendered this rascal more impatient and active. Every thing is prepared. The house is hired, aired, and provided with a proper guardian. The madman keeper has all his implements ready. We have now only to watch and catch them at a proper distance from all succour, to which in their amorous walks they have frequently strayed.

Though even you, Fairfax, seem to disapprove my conduct, I care not. Not to give you further trouble with what you call such positive prudes might be a very good maxim for you, who love your ease too much ever to be sensible of the boiling emotions of a soul like mine! You are Guy Fairfax; I am Coke Clifton. Not but I should have imagined the swelling volumes of injuries I have communicated would have lighted up a sympathetic flame of retributive vengeance even in you, which not all your phlegm could have quenched. But no matter—Though heaven, earth, and hell were to face me frowning, I would on! My purpose is fixed: let it but be accomplished, and consequences to myself will be the least of all my cares.

C. CLIFTON.

LETTER

LETTER CXII.

COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

London, Dover-Street.

SINCE the world began, never yet had scoundrel wight so many damning accessory incidents to contend with, as I have had during the whole progress of this affair ! All hell seems busy to blacken me ! —I have done the deed—They are secure —But the hour of exultation itself is embittered, and the legitimate triumph of vengeance made to wear the face of baseness—I have them ; but as I tell you there is an event, that happened the very moment preceding the seizure, which seems to have been contrived by the most malignant of the fiends of darkness, purposely to steep me in guilt indelible !

After our myrmidons had been three days in vain upon the watch, on Friday last Anna and Henley sallied forth, about two in the afternoon, to take one of their amorous rambles. As usual they were followed by Laura, who had sent me word of their intention, which she had learnt at breakfast time. Henley it seems had previously been into the city.

A scout was on the watch, and when they appeared soon brought the intelligence. All was in readiness. The keeper with three stout fellows in one party, and Mac Fane with four more in another.—The earliness of their setting out denoted they intended to lengthen their walk. The great danger was that it should have been directed to Kensington Gardens, as it has been several times lately; but in this instance fortune was on our side.

They went into the park, passed the gardens, walked beside the wall, crossed the Kensington road, and strayed exactly as we could have wished into the fields inclining toward Brompton.

I was

I was on horseback, and by the help of a pocket telescope kept them in view, without the danger of being seen, while they were in the park; but as soon as they had left it I thought it necessary to spur on, and be ready to prevent any blunders. I crossed the road down the lane at the turnpike, passed them, and saw them arm in arm. The sight was insupportable!

From what afterward happened they must have seen me too, though I imagined myself under cover of the hedge.

You know my determination not to be robbed; and indeed robbery at such a time, and in such a place, was a thing I had little reason to expect. But a fellow, who was lying in ambush at the turn of the lane, calculated differently. He imagined nobody to be near, and suddenly presented himself and his pistol, with a demand of my money.

I made a blow at him with the butt end of my whip, which missed his head, but fell on his shoulder. My horse started, he fired and missed, but sprung suddenly forward,

ward, and seized hold of the bridle. He had another pistol which he was preparing, imagining I should be more intimidated when I found him so desperate. All this happened immediately after I had passed Anna and Henley; and the latter perhaps having seen the fellow, and certainly having heard the pistol, flew in an instant, leaped the hedge, and just as the robber was again presenting his pistol, made a blow and knocked it out of his hand.

The pistol went off, and the fellow took to his heels. Henley, instead of pursuing him, stayed to enquire with much earnestness whether I had received any hurt.

At this very damning speck of time, Fairfax, the keeper and his scoundrels who had been dogging them came up. There were four of them: two before and two behind. The undaunted Henley severally knocked down the two fellows in front, and in an instant would undoubtedly have been far enough out of all reach; but, in the very act of striking the second rascal, he received a blow from a bludgeon, dealt
by

by the blood-hound keeper, which levelled him with the earth.

Never did my heart feel a twinge like that moment! I thought he was dead!—He lay motionless; notwithstanding which the infernal keeper continued his occupation with unconcern, turned the unresisting body over, slipped on the straight waistcoat, and bound down his arms.

At length he gave a groan! The instant I heard it I galloped off, full speed. It was too much for heart to endure!

I soon afterward heard him shout for aid more than once, but to this they presently put a stop, by forcing a gag into his mouth. They were not very far distant from the house where he was to be confined, and to which he was immediately hurried away.—

There he at present remains. His morning dialogues, his noon-day walks, and his nightly raptures are ended. They are things past, never more to return! Of that torment at least I have rid myself; and others compared to that are bliss ineffable!

fable ! I had sworn it should not be ! They might have read the oath largely written on my brow, and ought instinctively to have known it to be the decree of fate !

No, Fairfax ! I never asked a favour from him : never by my own consent received one ! Not all the tortures of all the tyrants the earth ever beheld should have extorted a consent so degrading ! His repeated interference was but a repetition of insult, and as such deserves only to be remembered. I asked not life at his hands ; and giving life, instead of a blessing, he did but give torture ! The gift was detestable and the giver ! Had I perished, he might have been safe and I at rest. I asked not charity of him. No ! On any terms I abhor existence ; but on those, darkness and hell are not so hateful ! It has ulcerated my heart, which not even vengeance itself I find has now the power to heal. For life I am made miserable ; but it shall not be a single misery !

While

While the keeper was acting his part of this gloomy drama, Mac Fane, as you may well imagine, was not idle. He and his unhallowed scoundrels presently made seizure of the lovely Anna. She stood confused and half terrified at the sudden flight of her enamorado! She was more confused, more terrified at the sudden appearance of her ravishers! I charged the scoundrels on their lives to use her tenderly! But what know such hell-hounds of tenderness?

She made I find a brave and by them unexpected resistance: but there were too many of them, and it was in vain! Mac Fane himself is amazed at her beauty; and harangues in his coarse and uncouth jargon on the energy and dignity of her deportment, in a manner which shews that even he was awed.

They were obliged however forcibly to stop her cries. This I imagined would be the case, and I had provided them with a white cambric handkerchief. But what
will

will not the touch of such unconsecrated rascals defile ?

Yes, Fairfax, they laid their prophane hands on her, clasped her in their loathsome arms, polluted her with their foul fingers ! The embrace of a Clifton she might perhaps pardon ; but this violation she never can !

Well then, let her add this injury to the rest ! I know her to be my enemy : sworn, rooted, and irrevocable ! And why should I tag regret to my sum of wretchedness ? No ! I will at least enjoy a moment of triumph, however transitory ! Let her despise me, but she shall remember me too !

Give me but this brief bliss, and there I would wish existence to end ! That excepted pleasure there is none for me ; and of pain I am weary. Yes ! I will glut my soul with this solitary, short rapture ; and condemn the storms that may succeed ! I fear them not, shall glory in them, and be glad to find foes, if such should arise, with whom contention will not be disgrace ! I wish and seek them. Their appearance
would

would give me employment, and employment would give me ease, and ease would be heaven !

C. CLIFTON.

LETTER CXIII.

COKE CLIFTON.

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

London, Dover Street.

ALARM has sounded her horn. The family is all confusion, all doubt, hurry, fruitless enquiry, and indecision. The absence of Anna and Henley at dinner threw Mrs. Clarke into consternation ; for Sir Arthur is down at Wenbourne-Hill, with old Henley and his son Edward. Each is indulging

indulging his dreams of improvement, marriage, docking of entails, and other projects, to which I have put an eternal stop.

Finding the evening advance, and that the two prisoners did not appear, the housekeeper sent to the aunt, Wenbourne. She heard the story and was amazed. She knew nothing of them.

Ten o'clock came, and terror increased. A messenger was dispatched to Lord Fitz-Allen ; and he could not at first tell whether to be sorry or glad, for he did not an instant forget to hope that it was some rascally act on the part of Henley.

He sent for the housekeeper. She came, and he interrogated her. The answers she gave did not please him, for the tendency of all his questions was to the disadvantage and crimination of Henley, whom she pertinaciously defended. She affirmed so positively, and so violently, that it could not be any plan or evil intention of his, that the proud lord was half angry but half obliged to doubt.

I took care to be in the way, expecting
as

as it happened that a message would be sent to me. I immediately attended his lordship, and learned all that I have been relating. I consoled him, and pretended to pity the family; not neglecting to lead his thoughts into the channel that would best serve my purpose, and to recapitulate every circumstance I could remember, or invent, that should induce him to believe Henley and Anna had eloped; but affecting candour, and pretending to argue against the possibility of such a supposition.

The effect I intended was produced.—He was fully convinced of Henley's being a low, selfish, contemptible scoundrel; and Anna a forward, disobedient, insolent miss.

I offered my services to pursue them, and pressed his acceptance of them violently; but was careful to counteract the offer, by shewing the impossibility of their being overtaken, and by exciting him rather to wish for their escape, that Anna might be flagrantly disgraced, and his penetration,

netration and authority vindicated to the whole world.

I did not neglect, before the departure of Mrs. Clarke, to display all my eagerness, by sending round to numerous inns and stable-keepers, to enquire whether any post-chaise had been hired, that should any way accord with the circumstances. Other messengers were dispatched, by my advice, to the different turnpikes; and a third set sent off to various watch-houses, to enquire whether any intelligence could be obtained of accidental deaths, or other mischances.

In short, I was very diligent to hurry the legs of the servants and the brains of their governors into every direction, but the right; and thus for a little while in some sort diverted myself, with the vagaries of the fools upon whom I was playing. One chop-fallen runner trod upon the heels of another, each with a repetition of his diversified nothings; till his lordship thought proper to recollect it was time for his dignity to retire, and not further disturb itself

on

on personages and circumstances so derogatory.

In the morning I was careful to be with him again. I breakfasted with him, and reiterated the same string of doubts, conjectures, alarms, and insinuations.

Mrs. Clarke returned. She had been up all night, and her looks testified the distress of her mind. She proposed sending an express after Sir Arthur: of the propriety of which I endeavoured to make the uncle doubt; but she was too zealous, and her oratory had too much passion, to be counteracted without danger. I therefore, when I saw resistance vain, became the most eager adviser of the measure.

There is no merit in imposing upon stupidity so gross as that of this supercilious blockhead. Mrs. Clarke would be much more to be feared, but that what she may say will be much less regarded. Her affection for Anna is extreme, and a high proof of the excellent qualities of her mistress.

Nor was she one whit less enthusiastic
in

in her praise of Henley. Notwithstanding the forbidding frowns and reproofs of his lordship, she ran over his whole history; and dwelt particularly on an act of benevolence done by him to her niece; that being a circumstance that had come immediately within her knowledge. She spoke with such a fervour and overflow of heart that she once or twice moved me.

She perceived something of the ridiculous compunction I felt, and fell on her knees, wrung my hand, and adjured me, in a tone of very extraordinary emphasis, to save her dear, her precious young lady. I scarcely could recover myself sufficiently to ask her which way it was in my power to save her; and to turn the conversation, by exclaiming to the peer—"Ah! Had she but allowed me the happiness and honour of being her protector, I think no man would have dared to do her harm."

The old housekeeper however continued, and began to denounce impending and inevitable evil on the persecutors of Henley

and Anna. I have no doubt she glanced at me, and that her mistress had informed her of the triumph gained over me. Why ay! I should indeed have been the scoff of the very rabble, had I not taken vengeance for my wrongs!

Yet her denunciations seemed prophetic: or rather were feeble descriptions of the excruciating pangs by which I am hourly gnawn!

I grew weary of the dull farce, and put an end to it as speedily as I conveniently could; leaving his sage lordship with the full conviction that the sudden disappearance of Henley, and his niece, could no otherwise be accounted for but by wilful elopement.

I am now preparing for a very different visit. A visit of vengeance! I expect no pleasure, no gratification but that alone! To prove the danger of injury done to me, to punish the perpetrators, to exult at their lamentations, and to look down with contempt at all menace, or retribution, is now my last remaining hope! Let me but en-

joy this, and all other expectation I willingly relinquish!—I am going—I have them in my grasp!—They shall feel me now!—

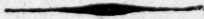
C. CLIFTON.

LETTER CXIV.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

LOUISA CLIFTON.



WHERE I am, what is to become of me, or whether I am ever to see my Louisa more, are things of which I am utterly ignorant. I write not with an expectation that my friend should read, but to memorandum events of which perhaps the world will never hear; and which, should this paper by any accident be preserved, it will scarcely believe.

This

This vile Clifton—[Surely I ought never again to call him my Louisa's brother—] This perverse man has grown desperate in error! The worst of my forebodings have not equalled his intents! His plan has long been mischief! Hypocrisy, violence, rape, no means are too foul!—Such things are incomprehensible!

I am confined in a lone house, somewhere behind Knightsbridge. I was seized I know not how by a band of ruffians, and conveyed hither. Every kind of despicable deceit appears to have been practised. Frank was decoyed from me. He flew once again to save the life, as he thought, of this base-minded man. I know not what is become of him, but have no doubt that he like me is somewhere suffering imprisonment, if he be permitted yet to live.

No thoughts are so tragical, no suspicions so horrid as not to be justified, by deductions and appearances which are but too probable. Yet I will not sink under difficulties, nor be appalled at the sight

of danger ; be it death, or what else it may. That I am in a state of jeopardy my seizure and imprisonment prove. That Frank is still in greater peril, if still in existence, I have just cause to conclude. There were pistols fired, and one after he leaped the hedge ; I know not at whom directed, nor what its fate !—I would if possible ward off apprehension. I know it to be folly, and I will endeavour to steel my heart against this as well as other mistakes. If he be dead, or if he be to die, grief will not revive or make him invulnerable. His own virtue must preserve him, or nothing can ; and in that I will confide.

That evil is meant to me it would be absurd to doubt ; but of what nature, where it is to begin, or where end, that time must disclose. For I will not permit myself to imagine the trifling indignities, or violence I have hitherto encountered, an evil worthy of complaint.

'Tis true my arms are bruised ; and I was rudely dealt with by the vile men who
seized

seized me: and that there should be such men is an evil. But to me it is none; or not worth a thought. If I would firmly meet what is to come, I must not weakly bewail what is past.

I am not immortal, neither is my strength infinite; but the powers I have I will use. We are oftener vanquished because we are fearful than because we are feeble. Our debility takes birth in our cowardice, and true fortitude is not to be abashed by trifling dangers.

I meant to write a narrative, but these reflections are forced upon me by my situation. I will proceed.

I was brought here, on Friday *****, by several men of vulgar but ferocious countenances; and my maid Laura with me. I made all the resistance in my power; and the men, without any regard to what I suffered in body or mind, twisted my arms behind me, so that I imagined one of them had been dislocated, and

forced a handkerchief into my mouth; handling, tossing, and griping me, without any respect whatever to decency or pain, till they had conveyed me from the fields, in which I was walking with Frank Henley, to the place where I am.

I scarcely can guess at the distance; but they hurried me away with great violence, crossing several gates, and forcing apertures through hedges, for the space I believe of not more than half an hour: it might be much less.

They brought me to a house walled round: into which having been admitted by an old woman, they hurried me forward up stairs, and shut me into a room decently furnished, with a fire in it and a bed-chamber adjoining; but with the windows barred up, and in which every precaution had evidently been taken to render escape impracticable.

Laura was shut up with me; and there was a slip of paper on the table, on which was written—"Laura is allowed to fetch
" whatever you may want. Let her ring
the

the bell, and the door will be opened."—
The hand-writing was Mr. Clifton's.

Among other necessaries, there was a book-case, furnished with the works of some of the best authors; and a writing-desk, with pens, ink, and paper.

The same old woman that opened the gate for the men, who brought me, constantly comes to open the door for Laura, when I ring. But this she does with great caution. A chain, similar to what is common for street-doors, is hung on the outside; which she puts up, and looks to see that I am not near, every time she opens the door. The first time she came I stood just behind Laura, and in a morose tone she bade me go back, or she would lock the door again.

After Laura had been several times down stairs, I enquired what discoveries she had made; and, as she informs me, the house appears to have no inhabitants but this old woman and ourselves. The old woman resides in the kitchen. The doors and windows are all secured; and

the same care is taken to prevent escape below stairs as above.

The food that has been brought us was good, and well dressed, but almost cold. Laura says she is sure it cannot be dressed in the house, which is most probable.

I communicate but few of my thoughts to Laura, because I fear I have good reason to be suspicious of her. I have long remarked her partiality in favour of Mr. Clifton, intermixed with some contradictory appearances, which I could not solve at the time, but which I now believe to have been awkward attempts to conceal that partiality, and to mislead me; which she in part effected.

The base designs of Mr. Clifton, from the nature of them, cannot have been very recent; and nothing perhaps was more necessary, to carry them into execution, than the seducing of the woman who by her situation could give him the best intelligence.

Since I have begun to doubt her, I have purposely cross-questioned her occasionally,
and

and she has answered with hesitation and incoherency. If however I can perceive the least hope that this letter should be conveyed to the post-office, by any person who may visit the house, and whom she may see but I cannot, I will trust it to her. The trust indeed is nothing, for it cannot increase my peril. The persecution of Mr. Clifton must prove most pernicious to himself. Unless he can deprive me of conscious innocence, it can injure me but little.

Among other ambiguous circumstances respecting Laura, she scarcely seems to repine at her confinement: though she has several times affected uneasiness, which while she acted it she evidently did not feel. Beside she is permitted to stay below, and run about the house; which, whatever caution of bars and bolts may have been used, she would not be suffered to do, as I should suppose, were she really in my interest.

About an hour ago we heard the yard bell ring and the gate open, and she was eager to go down. I encouraged her, and she rung for our turnkey. She had seen me writing, and, without being spoken to, took upon her to suppose it was a letter to my Louisa, and told me she *did believe* she could get it conveyed to the post. I am persuaded this is preconcerted officiousness. But as I said, I have nothing to lose, and there is a bare possibility of hope.

When she came up stairs again, she told me that the person who had rung the bell was some man of the neighbourhood, who had brought the old woman various trifling articles, and whom she had ordered to return at five o'clock, with tea and sugar.

If contrary to all expectation this should come to hand, Louisa, write to my father; inform him of all you know: and especially write to Mr. Clifton. It will be ineffectual, but write. If there be truth in woman, I would rejoice to suffer much more mischief than he has the power to inflict, could I but by that means restore him

him to a sense of his own worth ; or rather of the worth of virtue !

Why do I talk of mischief, and his power to inflict ? I hope to shew him he has no power over me ; and that the strength of men, and the force of walls, locks and bars, are feeble, when but resolutely opposed by the force of truth, actuating the will of weak and despised woman ?—Injury ?—Poor, depraved, mistaken man ! It is himself he injures ! Every effort he makes is but a new assault upon his own peace ! It is heaping coals of fire upon his own head ; which it has long been the wish of my heart to extinguish !

Had I but any reason to believe Frank Henley in safety, I would not suffer a single sigh to escape me. But I know too well Mr. Clifton dare not permit him to be at liberty, while he keeps me confined. Surely nothing can be attempted against his life ? And yet I sometimes shake with horror ! There is a reason which I know not whether I dare mention ; yet if Mr. Clifton should think proper to lay snares to

intercept and read my letters, he ought to be informed of this dangerous circumstance. I know not, Louisa, whether I am addressing myself to you or him ; but Frank Henley at the time that I was seized, and he likewise as I suppose, had bank bills in his possession to the amount of eight thousand pounds !

He had been that very morning into the city, to receive the money on his father's account ; and intended as we returned to leave them with Sir Arthur's banker.

If men such as those who seized on me were employed for the same violent purpose against him, and if they should discover a sum which would to them be so tempting, who can say that his life would be safe ? Frank Henley, the preserver of Clifton, the preceptor of truth, and the friend of man ; the benevolent, the magnanimous, noble-minded Frank, whose actions were uniform in goodness, whose heart was all affection, and whose soul all light—and murdered !

Why do I indulge a thought so inhuman, so impossible ? It could not be !—

No,

No, no ; it could not be ! A supposition so extravagant is guilt—Yet though I who cannot aid him ought not to encourage such doubts, let those who can, be warned and be active !

I am addressing myself to vacancy !—No one hears me ! No one will read what I write !

I will be calm. It is my situation, it is confinement, the bars I see and the bolts I hear that inspire these gloomy thoughts. They are unfounded, and certainly unavailing—He may have escaped ! He may at this instant be in search of me ! Hurrying, enquiring, despairing, and distracted ; in much deeper distress than I am : for were I but sure of his safety, I could almost defy misfortune ! Let not the world lose him ! Oh ! If any human creature should in time read this, let him hear, let him shudder, let him beware !

Pardon, Louisa ! I do not address myself to you ! Too well I know my friend to

doubt her! No cold delay, no unfeeling negligence, no rash phrensy is to be feared from her!—Alas! What I am writing she will never read! It cannot be! The man I have to encounter is too practised in deceit, or I should not have been where I am!

Well then, may he himself read! And while he reads, thus let his conscience speak—
“There is a man whose worth and virtues are such, that the loss of him would
“be a loss to the whole human race.—
“From this man I received a thousand
“acts of kindness; for which I returned
“ten thousand insults. I repulsed him,
“scorned him, struck him; and he, dis-
“regarding the innumerable injuries I
“had done him, but a few hours after
“plunged headlong down the dreadful
“abyss, to snatch me from the grave. I
“was dead and he gave me life. In return
“I have robbed him of what men prize
“even more than life, of liberty. But if
“I have put him in jeopardy, if I suffer
“him to remain in the power of hardened
“and

“ and wicked men, and if he perish,
“ mercy cannot pardon me, justice cannot punish, and charity itself must hold
“ me in abhorrence.”

A. W. ST. IVES.

LETTER CXV.

COKE CLIFTON.

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

London, Dover Street.

MY actions are now become one continued chain of artifice. But were that all and were not the objects of this artifice of a nature so new and so painful, it would afford me amusement, and not be any cause of vexation.

As

As it is I feel apprehensions which are wholly different from any I ever felt before. To deceive in countries where deception is a pastime, authorised, practised, and applauded, is I find something very opposite to what would seem the same thing, in this gloomy land of apathy and phlegm. There it is a sport and a pleasure. Here it is a business of serious danger and general detestation. But no matter !—

I am obliged to watch times and seasons, for I have little doubt that I myself am watched. That old housekeeper I am sure suspects me ; and her affection for her mistress is so full, so restless, that it cannot but sharpen her intellects, and make her employ every engine she can imagine for discovery. I walked up to Fozard's as I often do for my horse, and I saw one of Sir Arthur's servants pass the yard, soon after I entered it. I have little doubt but he was dogging me.

I got on horseback and rode slowly down
toward

toward Pimlico, and over Westminster-bridge, but I saw no more of him.

As soon as I was out of town I mended my pace, and gradually increased it to a full gallop. Passing through Vauxhall, I crossed the Thames again at Battersea-bridge, rode through Chelsea, and presently gained the Brompton road.

My first visit was to the keeper. The fellow has a strange look ! A villainous physiognomy ! I enquired after his prisoner and found he was safe. The house is well secured ; not modern, but in the style of the last century ; strong and heavy, and before this affair was thought of had been fitted up for the purposes of confinement, but is now still better fortified. It has a garden, which is surrounded by a high wall, in which the prisoner is suffered to exercise himself ; but not without the very necessary precaution of confining his arms in the strait waistcoat, securing the doors, and attentively watching his motions.

I ordered the fellow to see that Henley wanted for nothing, to let a boy he has
wait

wait upon him, and to keep out of his way himself, for two reasons of my own. I do not wish Henley to suffer the insults of such a vulgar and narrow-souled rascal: my revenge is of a nobler kind. Neither am I quite certain that this keeper, hardened, obdurate, and pitiless as he is, could withstand Henley's oratory. At least I would not willingly have him subjected to the temptation: though the fellow is so averse to any sense of human pity that I think the danger is very small.

He was offended however at my thinking proper to direct him, and surlily told me he understood his trade.

Here I met Mac Fane, by appointment. He cannot forget the disgrace of Covent-garden, and spoke of Henley with a degree of malignity that would want but little encouraging to become dangerous.—I am to pay him the thousand pounds in a few days, and our place of rendezvous is then to be once more at the Shakespeare.

I was glad to escape from the company
of

of these new intimates of mine, these first-born of Beelzebub, and to fly to my other prisoner. I say fly, for I set out with eagerness enough; but every step I took I felt my ardour abate. The houses are more than half a mile apart, and I thought proper to go thither on foot, and not to take any common path, but to cross the fields, as the securest mode.

Laura knew I was to be there, and had her tale ready. She presently came down. I enquired after her mistress, and if her account be true, this heroic woman has not shed a tear, but has behaved with all her apparent customary calm. She is a divine creature!

As I rode along, I made a thousand determinations that all should be that day ended. I cursed myself, pledged my honour, used every method which might have shewn me how much I doubted my own resolution, to prove to myself how irrevocably determined I was! —The little remaining firmness I had left

left wholly died away at the relation of Laura.—

I must stay till the calm dignity of her mind shall begin to decline. The nature of her confinement, the fears she cannot but have for her Henley, the recollection of her friends and father, and her apprehensions of me must all quickly contribute to produce this effect.

I do not pretend to deny that I feel a reluctance to a first interview: but I am determined the first shall be the only one. I know myself, and know when once I am heated it will not then be Anna St. Ives, a miracle though she be, than can over awe or conquer me. I have the stubbornness of woman, and the strength of man. I am reckless of what is to follow, but the thing shall be!—There is not a particle in my frame that does not stand pledged to the deed, by honour and oath! It is the only event for which I care, or for which I live.

Nor

Nor shall I live long when once it is over. I foresee I shall not. But that is not a painful, no, it is a satisfactory thought! I would even present her the pistol, would she but dispatch me the moment my revenge is gratified. I would then sleep, and forget all that is, and all that might have been.

She has been writing. I knew it would be one source of amusement to her, and I provided her with implements. Laura asked and she owned it was a letter to my sister, which she could wish were sent. But that must not be. She means to give it to Laura; I of course shall be the next receiver.

This girl, Laura, acts her part ill. She is not half sorrowful enough. I wonder Anna does not remark it; and Laura says she does not, though that is no very good proof. The complexion of her letter I think will tell me how far she does or does not confide in her maid. I know she holds suspicion in contempt; and yet I think my high opinion of her discrimination

tion would find some abatement, were I certain that she did not suspect this shallow girl.

My soul burns to have it over ! And yet like a coward I refrain. But I will not long submit to such contemptible qualms. I will not continue to be diffident of myself ; for it is that only by which I am withheld. Not a single wrong is forgotten ! I repeat them in my sleep !— Ay, Fairfax, such sleep as I have is nothing but a repetition of them ; and a rehearsal of the revenge by which they are to be appeased ! I will return to-morrow, or perhaps next day ; and then—! You shall then hear more from

C. CLIFTON.

LETTER

LETTER CXVI.

COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

London, Dover-Street.

SIR Arthur arrived in town this morning. He brought the usurer Henley up with him in the same carriage.

Young St. Ives set out before them, and was in London last night. He drove directly to my lodgings, and I was fortunately at home. This did not look as if I were in the secret ; and if he had any suspicions he had not the courage to intimate them.

I condoled with him, said it was a strange affair, a riddle I could not read, a mystery which time must elucidate, for it baffled

baffled all conjecture. He did little more than echo me, and I pretended I would have ridden half over the world to recover his sister, had there been but the least clue; but there was not, and I found myself obliged to sit still in despair and astonishment.

He said it was all very true, and he was very tired. He should therefore drive home, get some refreshment, and go to bed. This fellow, Fairfax, walks on two legs, looks the world in the face, and counts for one on the muster-roll. "But nature, crescent in him, grew only in thews and bulk." Yet on the parade, fools and gapers will mistake him for a man.

Contention with Anna St. Ives is honourable, but to seem to shrink from beings like these, or to practise concealment with such mere images of entity, is repugnant to the generous scorn they merit and inspire. Imperious necessity however prescribes law, and I took care to prevent Sir Arthur's visit to me, by having notice sent
me

me of his arrival, and immediately going to the encounter.

To anticipate is to overturn the card-castles of this puny race. Come upon them unexpectedly, stare at them undauntedly, and interrogate them abruptly, and they are put to the rout. Their looks even intreat pardon for the ill they thought, but durst not utter.

Sir Arthur, I own, beheld me with a suspicious eye; and though he endeavoured to seem to credit me, he did it with an awkward air.

Mrs. Clarke hearing I was there came in, and exceeding even all her former fervour, importuned me, in the most direct and vehement manner, to tell what I had done with Mr. Henley and her dear young lady. She more than ever disconcerted me. Her exuberant passion addressed itself alternately to me and her master. Her tears as well as her words were abundant, her urgency and ardour extreme, and she ended her apostrophe with again conjuring

me to tell what was become of her dear, dear young lady !

“ Ay, pray, pray do ”—whimpered the baronet in a maudlin tone, moved by the unfeigned passion of his housekeeper. I gave him a look, and the driveller added—
“ if you know.”

I was glad of a pretence to get away, and after telling him the distress of his mind was the only apology for his conduct, I instantly quitted him, without any effort on his part to detain me.

Among other things, Mrs. Clarke repeatedly reproached herself for not having written or sent to my sister ; and the knight acknowledged—“ Ay, it was very neglectful ! But his mind had been so disturbed that he had forgotten it too ! ”

Why do I misapply my time on beings so imbecile ? Maugre all my resolves, I have not seen her yet, Fairfax ! Nor have I opened her letter ! I dare not. Her Henley I am sure is in it, and additional rage would be indubitable madness ! Neither is this the thing most to be feared.

She

She has an expanded heart, a capacious, a benevolent heart, and she may have said something which were I to see, and yet do the deed which shall be done, it might shew me more fiend-like than even the foul reflection of my present thoughts. Perturbation has done its work; it needs no increase. This quality of benevolence, in which they both glory, is torture to recollect. I say, Fairfax, I never asked their charity. Did I not spurn it from me, the moment I was insulted by the offer? Be pity bestowed on beggars: the partiality that springs from affection, or the punishment due to neglect for me!

I will be with her speedily, Fairfax! Though I linger, I do not relent. Such mercy as the being out of doubt can bestow she shall receive; the pleading world should not wring a greater from me!

C. CLIFTON.

P. S. I must be speedy: my sister will hear of the affair by to-morrow's post, and I shall have her whole artillery playing
F 2 upon

upon me ; and in the form of letters I suppose ; for I do not think she will hope any thing from personal interview ; I made her too sensibly feel her own insignificance when last we met. I expected indeed an attack from her much sooner, for the young lady does not want confidence in her own skill and courage : she is of the Henley school. However I do not intend to peruse any of her epistles. I would send them back unopened, but that it would be an avowal of a knowledge of their contents ; and I have no need to increase suspicion, whose broad eyes are already glaring at me. But I will immediately put an end to the witch, and engender black certainty in her stead ! The imp shall appear, and shake horrors from her snaky hair !

LETTER

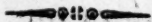
LETTER CXVII.



ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

LOUISA CLIFTON.

*The Lone House.*

ONCE more, though but in imagination, let me converse with my friend. I know it is delusion, but it was the sweet custom of our souls, and well may be indulged. Ignorant perhaps of the cause, my Louisa is at this moment accusing me of a neglect which my heart disavows. Let me as usual give her the history of that heart: it is a theme from which she has taught me to derive profit.

This is the fifth day of my confinement. I have the same walls, the same windows and bars to contemplate; and the same

bolting, and locking, and clanking to hear. It is with difficulty that I can at some few intervals divert my thoughts from the gloom which my own situation, the distresses of my family, and the danger of a youth so dear to virtue contribute to inspire.

Nor do I know what at this moment may be the affliction of my friend. Should she have heard, she cannot but discover the principal agent of this dark plot; and exquisite indeed would be the anguish of her mind, could she forget that fortitude and resignation are duties. May they never be forgotten by me, during this my hour of trial!

My shoulder I fear has received some strain or hurt: the pain of it continues to be great, and the inflammation is not abated. The bruises on my arms have increased in blackness, and their tension is not in the least diminished. The hands of those bad men must have been as rough and callous as their hearts: they had no mercy in their gripe.

There

There is a lonesome stillness in this house, that favours the dismal reveries which my situation suggests. If my handkerchief do but drop I start; and the stirring of a mouse places Clifton full before me. Yet I repel this weakness with all my force. I despise it. Nor shall these crude visions, the hideous phantoms of the imagination, subdue that fortitude in which I must wholly confide.

For these last two days, Laura has pretended to grieve at confinement: but it is mimic sorrow; words of which the heart has no knowledge. She perceives I suspect her, and her acting is but the more easily detected.

I know not whether it be not my duty to determine to exclude her; though that seems like cowardice. I think it is not in her power to harm me; and for telling, if she have been false, she has done her worst. I never made a practice of concealment, neither will I now have recourse to such a fallacious expedient. Yet she sleeps in the same chamber with me; and ought I not

to be aware of inspiring perfidy with projects? 'Tis true my slumbers are broken, my nights restless, and the cracking of the wainscot is as effectual in waking me as a thunder-clap could be. I am resolved, however, to take the key out of the door, and either hide it or hold it all night in my hand. Mischief is meant me, or why am I here?

I am continually looking into the closets, behind the doors, and under the beds and drawers. I am haunted by the supposition that I shall every moment see this bad man start up before me! What know I of the base engines he may employ, or the wicked arts to which he may have recourse?

But he shall not subdue me! He may disturb me by day, and terrify me by night; but he shall not subdue me! Shall the pure mind shake in the presence of evil? Shall the fortitude which safety feels vanish at the approach of danger?

Louisa, I will steel my soul to meet him! I know not how or when he will come! I cannot tell what are the vile, black instruments

ments with which he may work! Sleep I scarcely have any. I eat with hesitation, and drink with trembling. I have heard of potions and base practices, that make the heart shudder! Yet I sometimes think I could resist even these. He shall not subdue me! Or if he do, it shall be by treachery such as fiends would demur to perpetrate.

Why do I think thus of him? Surely, surely he cannot be so lost as this! Yet here I am! I own I tremble and recoil; but it is with the dread that he should plunge himself so deep in guilt as never more to rise!

Poor Frank! Where art thou? How are thy wretched thoughts employed? Or art thou still allowed to think? Art thou among the living? If thou art, what is thy state! Thine is now the misery of impotence, thou who hast proved thyself so mighty in act! Thou wouldst not strike, thou wouldst not injure; and yet thy foe would sink before thee, had he not allied himself to perfidy, and had he but left thee

free. His most secret machinations could not have withstood thy searching spirit. Thou wouldst have been here! These bolts would have flown, these doors would have opened, and I should have seen my favour!

He hears me not! Nor thou, Louisa! I am destitute of human aid!

Farewell, farewell! Ah! Farewell indeed; for I am talking to emptiness and air!

Do I seem to speak with bitterness of heart? Is there enmity in my words?—Surely I do not feel it! The spirit of benevolence and truth allows, nay commands me to hate the vice; but not its poor misgoverned agents. They are wandering in the maze of mistake. Ignorance and passion are their guides, and doubt and desperation their tormentors. Alas! Rancour and revenge are their inmates; be kindness and charity mine.

A. W. ST. IVES.

LET-

LETTER CXVIII.

COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

Brompton-House.

I AM here—At the scene of action—she is in the room above me, and I am ridding myself of reluctance; stringing my nerves for assault. I know not why this should be necessary, but I feel that it is!

I am waiting to question Laura; but I ordered her to be in no haste to come down, when she heard me ring. I would not have my victim suspect me to be here. I would come upon her by surprise, and not when she was armed and prepared for repulse. I will order the old woman to go presently and open and shut the gate; as

if she were letting the person out, who came in when I rung.

I expect, nay am certain, her resistance will be obstinate—But unavailing!—I say unavailing!—Neither house nor road are near, and yet I could wish the scene were removed to the dark gloom of a forest; embosomed where none but tigers or hyenas should listen to her shrieks—I know they will be piercing;—heart-rending!—But—!

I tell you, Fairfax, I have banished all sense of human pity from my bosom: it is an enemy to my purpose, and that must be!—Though the heavens should shake and the earth open, it must!

Yet do not think, Fairfax, bent as I am on the full fruition of love and vengeance, I would use cruelty—Understand me: I mean wanton or unnecessary brutality. I will be as forbearing as she will permit. I fear she will not suffer me to caress her tenderly—But she shall never sleep in the arms of Henley!—She never shall!—I will
make

make sure of that! My mind is reconciled to all chances, that excepted.

As I passed, I called at the mad-house; where I found Mac Fane and the scowling keeper in high divan. They have been horribly alarmed. Henley has attempted an escape, which he was in danger of effecting; but he is brought back, after having led them a short chase.

The apprehensions of these scoundrels concerning future consequences are very great, and swell almost to terror. They talked strangely, asked which way we were to get rid of them at last, and conceive him to be a dangerous enemy. Their thoughts seemed tinged with dark lurkings, which they dare not own; and certainly dare not act, without my leave. These fellows are all villainy! A league with demons would be less abominable!— I must close the account, and shake off such pestilential scoundrels!—

Laura comes! I will question her a little, and then——!

I am

Dover Street.

I am returned, and am still tormented by delay !—I cannot help it—I said I would not use wilful cruelty : that were to heap unnecessary damnation !

Laura began by softening my heart with her narrative. Her angel mistress is all resignation, all kindness, all benevolence ! She almost forgets herself, and laments only for me ! This I could have withstood ; but she has been brutally treated, by that intolerable ban dog, Mac Fane, and his blood-hounds. Fairfax, how often have I gazed in rapture at the beauteous carnation of her complexion, the whiteness of her hands and arms, and the extreme delicacy of their texture ! And now those tempting arms, Laura tells me, nay, her legs too, are in twenty places disfigured and black, with the gripes and bruises she received. Gibbets and racks overtake the wolf-hearted villains ! Her shoulder is considerably hurt ! It is inflamed, and, as she acknowledges, very painful ; yet she does not utter a complaint !

Why

Why did this heroic woman ever injure me? By what fatal influence am I become her foe? Her gentle kindness, her calm, unruffled, yet dignified patience I have experienced—Madman!—Idiot!—Have I not experienced her hatred too, her abhorrence? Did not her own lips pronounce the sentence? And do I not know her? Will she recede? And shall I?—Never!—Never!—No, no—It must be.

But I did rightly. This was not the moment. There would have been something barbarously mean, in making her exert the little strength she has with such pain and peril.

I rode to Kensington and procured her a lenitive, with which I returned. The purpose of vengeance excepted, I would feel as generously as herself; and even vengeance, did I know how, I would dignify—But do not surmise that I would retract!—No, by heaven! A thought so weak has never once entered my heart!

I am restless, and must return—Till it
be

be over, earth has no pleasure for me ;
and after I am sure it will have none. No
—No—I have but this single gleam of
satisfaction ! The light is going out ; give
me but one full blaze, and I shall then
welcome total darkness !

C. CLIFTON.

LETTER CXIX.

COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

London, Dover Street.

FOR a few days after having secured
my tormentors, I enjoyed something like
comparative ease ; but the ugly imps that
haunted me, in fiercer crowds again are
swarming round me. I am too miserable
to

to exist in this state ; it must be ended. It is a turmoil that surpasses mortal sufferance ! If she will wrestle against fate, it is not my fault. I have no wish to practise more upon her than is necessary. But the thing must be.

Sleep I have none, rest I have none, peace I have none. I get up and sit down, walk out and come back, mutter imprecations unconsciously to myself, and turn the eyes of insolent curiosity and ridiculous apprehension upon me in the street. A fellow has just now watched me home ; deeming me a lunatic I suppose ; for he had seen my agitation, and heard the curses which I knew not were uttered aloud, till his impertinent observation of me brought it to my recollection.

But this shall not be ! It shall end !— Though I rend her heart-strings for it, I will have ease ! The evening approaches ; my horse is ordered and I will be gone. I will not, cannot endure this longer !

Brompton-House.

I am here, and have talked with Laura. She owns she is suspected, and that her mistress takes the key out of the bed-chamber door, when they go to rest, and hides it: Laura by accident has discovered where. She puts it on the ledge behind the head of her bed, but within the reach of her arm.

This has suggested a thought: I will wait here till midnight and sleep have lulled her apprehensions. It will be better than facing her in the glare of day. Her eye, Fairfax, is terrible in her anger. It is too steady, too strong in conscious innocence to encounter. Darkness will give me courage, and her terror and despair.—For it must come to that! It cannot, otherwise be; and be it must! In the blaze of noon, when fortitude is awake and the heart beating high perhaps with resentment, nothing but the goadings of despair could make me face her. The words she would use would be terrible, but her looks
would

would petrify!—By this stratagem I shall avoid them.

Nor do I blush to own my cowardice, in the presence of Anna St. Ives: she being armed with innocence and self-approbation; and I abashed by conscious guilt, violence, and intentional destruction.

Why aye!—Let the thick swarth of night cover us! I feel, with a kind of horrid satisfaction, the deep damnation of the deed! It is the very colour and kind of sin that becomes me; sinning as I do against Anna St. Ives! With any other it would be boy's sport; a thing to make a jest of after dinner; but with her it is rape, in all its wildest contortions, shrieks, and expiring groans!

I lie stretched on burning embers, and I have hours yet to wait. Oh that I were an idiot!—The night is one dead, dun gloom! It looks as if murrain, mildew, and contagion were abroad, hovering over earth and bleeding plagues. I will walk out awhile, among them—Will try to meet them——Would that my disturbed imagination could but conjure
up

up goblins, sheeted ghosts, heads wanting bodies, and hands dropping blood, and realize the legends of ignorance and infancy, so that I could freeze memory and forget the horrors by which I am haunted!

It draws near midnight—I am now in her apartment, the room next to her bed-chamber.

My orders have been obeyed; the old woman, pretending to lock up her prisoner, shot back the bolts, put down the chain, and left the door ready for me to enter unheard.

Laura has her instructions. She is to pretend only, but not really, to undress herself; and I bade her not lie down, lest she should drop asleep. When she thinks it time, she is to glide round, steal the key, and open the door.

I am fully prepared; am undressed, and ready for the combat. I have made a
mighty

mighty sacrifice ! Youth, fortune, fame, all blasted ; life renounced, and infamy ascertained ! It is but just then that I should have full enjoyment of the fleeting blifs.

Surely this huffy sleeps ? No !—I hear her stir !—She is at the door ! And now— !

Heaven and hell are leagued against me, to frustrate my success ! Yet succeed I will in their despite—'Tis now broad day, and here I am, in the same chamber, encountered, reproved, scorned, frantic, and defeated !

As soon as I heard Laura with the key in the door, I put out the candles. She turned the lock, the door opened, and I sprang forward. Blundering idiot as I was ! I had forgotten to remove a chair, and tumbled over it. The terrified Anna was up and out of bed in an instant. The door opens inward to the bed-chamber.—

Her

Her fear gave her strength ; she threw Laura away, and clapped to the door.

By this time I had risen, and was at it. I set my shoulder to it with a sudden effort, and again it half opened. I pushed forward, but was repelled with more than equal opposition. My left arm in the struggle got wedged in the door : the pain was excessive, and the strength with which she resisted me incredible. By a sudden shock I released my hand, but not without bruising it very much, and tearing away the skin.

My last effort was returned by one more than equal on her part. But I imagine she had set her foot against something which gave way, for she suddenly came down, with a blow and a sound that made my heart shrink !

Still I endeavoured to profit by it, though not soon enough ; for the first moment I was too much alarmed. She could not feel pain or blows, and rose instantaneously. I forced the door some little way, and she then gave a single shriek ! It was
a dreadful

a dreadful one—and was followed by a repulse which I could not overcome. The door was closed, and like lightning locked. I then heard her begin to pant and heave for breath—After a few seconds she exclaimed—Clifton ! You are a bad man !—A treacherous, wicked man, and are seeking your own destruction ! I am your prisoner, but I fear you not ! Mark me, Clifton : I fear you not !

I hesitated some time : at last I ventured to ask—Are you hurt, madam ?

I do not know ! I do not care ! I value no hurt you can do me ! I am above harm from you !—Though you have recourse to perfidy and violence, yet I defy you ! In darkness or in light, I defy you !

Let me intreat you, madam, to retire to rest.

No ! I will stand here all night ! I will not move !

Upon my honour, madam, upon my soul, I will molest you no more to-night !

I tell you, man, I fear you not ! Night or day, I fear you not !

I request,

I request, I humbly intreat you would not expose yourself to the injuries of the night air, and the want of sleep !

I will sleep no more ! I want no sleep ; I fear no injuries ; not even those you intend me !

Indeed, madam, you do not know the danger—

Mimic benevolence and virtue no more, Clifton ! It is base in you ! It is beneath a mind like yours !—You are a mistaken man ! Dreadfully mistaken ! You think me devoted, but I am safe. Unless you kill, you never can conquer me ! Beware ! Turn back ! Destruction is gaping for you, if you proceed !

Need she have told me this, Fairfax ? Could she think I knew it not ?—But she too is mistaken. Her courage is high, I grant ; is admirable ; and, were any other but I her opponent, as she says, not to be conquered ! I adore the noble qualities of her mind ; but great though they are, when she defies me she over-rates them.

I own

I own her warning was awful! My heart shrunk from it; and I retired; taking care that she should hear me as I went, that she might be encouraged to go to rest. My well-meant kindness was vain. She never did confide in me, and never can. I heard her call Laura, and order her to strike a light, set an arm chair, and bring her clothes: after which I understood, from what I heard, that she dressed herself and sat down in it, with her back to the door, there waiting patiently till the morning.

How she will behave, or what she will say to Laura I cannot divine. Most probably she will insist on banishing her the apartment; for she never gave servants much employment, and always doubted whether the keeping of them were not an immoral act, therefore is little in want of their assistance.

But let her discard this treacherous and now ineffective tool. I want her no more. I will not quit the house, Fairfax; I will neither eat nor sleep, till I have put her

to the trial which she so rashly defies ! At her uncle's table she defied me, and imagined she had gazed me into cowardice. She knew me not : it was but making vengeance doubly sure. This experience ere now should have taught her. Has she escaped me ? Is she not here ? Does she not feel herself in the ravisher's arms ? If not, a few hours only and she shall !

Let her not be vain of this second repulse she has given me ; it ought to increase her terror, for it does but add to my despair. My distempered soul will take no medicine but one, and that must be administered ; though more venomous than the sting of scorpion or tooth of serpent, and more speedy in dissolution.

I left her room that she might breakfast undisturbed. There is something admirably, astonishingly firm, in the texture of her mind. Laura has been down, babbling to me all she knew. At eight o'clock, when it had been light a full hour,
Anna,

Anna, after once or twice crossing her chamber to consider, turned the key and resolutely opened the door; expecting by her manner, Laura says, to see me rush in; for she threw it suddenly open, as if fearful it should knock her down.

She walked out, looked steadfastly around, examined every part of the chamber, and after having convinced herself I was not there, sat down to write at the table where not an hour before I had been seated. When the breakfast was brought, she bade Laura take it away again; saying she had no appetite: but immediately recollecting herself, ejaculated—"Fie!—" "It is weak! It is wrong!"—And added "Stay, Laura! Put it down again!"

She then, with a calm and determined sedateness, began to serve herself and Laura; treating this perfidious woman [For no matter that I made her so, such she is,] with the same equanimity of temper and amenity as formerly. The mistress ate, for she was innocent and resolved; but the maid could not, for she was guilty and

in a continual tremor. “ Be pacified”—
said Anna to her — “ Compose your
“ thoughts, and take your breakfast. I am
“ much more sorry for than angry at the
“ part you have acted. You have done
“ yourself great injury, but me none : at
“ least, so I trust !—Be appeased and
“ eat your breakfast. Or, if you cannot
“ eat with me, go down and eat it in
“ peace below.”

The benevolent suavity of this angel has made the light-minded hussy half break her heart. Her penitential tears now flow in abundance ; and she has been officiously endeavouring to petition me not to harm so good, so forgiving, so heavenly a young lady ! I begin to fear she would willingly be a traitor next to me, and endeavour to open the doors for her mistress. But that I will prevent. I will not quit the house till all is over ! I have said it, Fairfax !

I will then immediately set Henley free, tell him where she is, where I am to be found, and leave him to seek his own mode of vengeance ! Should he resort to
the

the paltry refuge of law, I own that then I would elude pursuit. But should the spirit of man stir within him, and should he dare me to contention, I would fly to meet him in the mortal strife ! He is worthy of my arm, and I would shew how worthy I am to be his opposite !

It is now noon, and Laura has again been with me, repeating the same story, with additions and improvements. Anna has been talking to her, and has made a deep impression upon her. She is all penitence and petition, and is exceedingly troublesome, with her whining, her tears, and her importunity, which I have found it difficult to silence.

I learn from her own account she has owned all, and betrayed all she knew ; and Anna has been telling her that she, and I, and all such sinners, however deep and deadly, ought to be pitied, counselled, and reformed ; and that our errors only ought to be treated with contempt, dis-

dain, and hatred. She has talked to her in the most gentle, soothing, and sympathetic manner; till the fool's heart is ready to burst.

Anna has drawn a picture of my state of mind which has terrified her—And so it ought!—She has been sobbing, kneeling, and praying, for my sake, for Anna's sake, for God's sake to be merciful, and do no more mischief; “Her mistress is “an angel, and not a woman!”—Why true!—“Never had a young lady so forgiving, so kind, and so courageous a “heart!”—True again!—“But it is impossible, if I should be so wicked as to “lay violent hands upon her, for her not “to sink, and lie for mercy at my feet.”—Once more true, true!—

Mercy!—I have it not, know it not, nor can know! She herself has banished it from my breast and from her own: at least the mercy I would ask——For could it be—? Were there not a Henley—? No, no!—There is one wide destruction for us all! I am on the brink, and they
must

must down with me! —Have they not placed me there? Are they not now pulling me, weighing me, sinking me?

This is the moment in which I would conjure up all the wrongs, insults, contempts, and defiances she has heaped upon me——What need I?——They come unbidden!——And now for the last act of the tragedy!

I have kept my word, Fairfax: I have been, have faced her, have—! You shall hear! I will faithfully paint all that passed. I will do her justice, and in this shew some sparks of magnanimity, of which perhaps she does not think me capable—No matter—

It was necessary the temper of my mind should be wound up to the highest pitch, before I could approach her. I rushed up stairs, made the bolts fly, and the lock start back. Yet the moment the door opened, I hesitated—

However, I shook myself with indignation,

tion, entered, and saw her standing firmly in the middle of the apartment, ready to assert the bold defiance she had given me. The fixed resolution of her form, the evident fortitude of her soul, and the steadfast encounter of her eye, were discomfiting. Like a coward I stood I cannot tell how long, not knowing what to say, she looking full upon me, examining my heart, and putting thought to the rack. Benignant as she is, at such onsets of the soul she feels no mercy.

Self-resentment at the tame, crest-fallen countenance I wore at last produced an effort, and I stammered out—Madam—

Her only answer was a look—I endeavoured to meet her eye, but in vain.

I continued.—From my present manner you will perceive, madam, I am conscious of the advantage you have over me; and that my own heart does not entirely approve all I have done.

I see something of your confusion—I wish I saw more.

But neither can it forget its injuries!

What

What are they?

The time was when I met you with joy, addressed you with delight, and gazed on you with rapture!—Nay I gaze so still!

Poor, weak man!

Yes, madam, I know how much you despise me! A thousand repeated wrongs inform me of it: they have risen, one over another, in mountainous oppression to my heart, till it could endure no more.

Feeble, mistaken man!

In those happy days when I approached you first, my thoughts were loyal, my means were honest, and my intentions pure.

Pure?

Yes, madam, pure.

You never yet knew what purity meant!

I came void of guile, with an open and honourable offer of my heart. I made no difficulties, felt no scruples, harboured no suspicions. In return for which I was doubted, catechised, chidden, trifled with, and insulted. When I hoped for sympathy, I met rebuke; and while my affec-

tions glowed admiration, yours retorted contempt. Your heart was prepossessed: it had no room for me: it excluded me, scorned me, and at the first opportunity avowed its hatred.

Go on!—Neither your mistakes, your accusations, nor your anger shall move me—I pity your errors. Continue to ascribe that to my injustice, or to a worse motive, if a worse you can find, which was the proper fruit of your irascible and vindictive temper. Reconcile your own actions to your own heart, if you can; and prove to yourself I merit the perfidy, assault, and imprisonment you have practised upon me: as well as the mischief which I have every reason to suppose you intend.

Then, madam, avoid it! Spare both yourself and me the violence you forebode?

What! Sink before unruly passion? Stand in awe of vice? Willingly administer to shameless appetites, and a malignant spirit of revenge?—Never, while I have life!

Stop!

Stop!—Beware!—I am not master of my own affections! I am in a state little short of phrensy!—Be the means fair or foul, mine you shall be—The decrees of Fate are not more fixed—I have sworn it, and though fire from heaven waited to devour me, I will keep my oath!—Could you even yet but think of me as perhaps I deserve—! I say, could you, madam—

I cannot, will not marry you! Nothing you can say, nothing you can threaten, nothing you can act shall make me!

Be less hasty in your contempt!—Fear me not!—Scorn for scorn, injury for injury, and hate for hate!

I hate only your errors! I scorn nothing but vice—On the virtues of which a mind like yours is capable my soul would dilate with ecstasy, and my heart would doat! But you have sold yourself to crookedness! Base threats, unmanly terrors, and brute violence are your despicable engines!—Wretched man! They are impotent!—They turn upon yourself; me they cannot harm!—I am above you!

I care not for myself—I have already secured infamy—I have paid the price, and will enjoy the forfeiture—Had you treated me with the generous ardent love I so early felt for you, all had been well—I the happiest of men, and you the first of women! But your own injustice has dug the pit into which we must all down—It is wide and welcome ruin!—Even now, condemned as I have been, scorned as I am, I would fain use lenity and feel kindness. I will take retribution—no power shall prevent me—but I would take it tenderly.

Oh shame upon you, man?—Tenderly?—Can the mischief and the misery in which you have involved yourself and so many others; can treachery, brutal force, bruises, imprisonment, and rape be coupled with tenderness? If you have any spark of noble feeling yet remaining in your heart, cherish it: but if not, speak truth to yourself! Do not attempt to varnish such foul and detestable guilt with fair words!

I would

I would advise, not varnish ! What I have done I have done—I know my doom—I am already branded ! Opprobrium has set her indelible mark upon me ! I am indexed to all eternity !

You mistake, Clifton !—Beware !—You mistake ! You mistake ! [It is impossible to imagine, Fairfax, the energy with which these exclamations burst from her—It was a fleeting but false cordial to my heart.] Of all your errors that is the most fatal ! Whatever rooted prejudices or unjust laws may assert to the contrary, we are accountable only for what we do, not for what we have done. Clifton beware ! Mark me—I owe you no enmity for the past : I combat only with the present.

Do not delude me with shadows. Bring your doctrine to the test : if you bear me no enmity, if what I have done can be forgotten, and what I would do— ! Madam— !—Anna— !—Once more, and for the last time—take me !

It cannot be !—It cannot be !

Then,

Then, since you will shew no mercy, expect none.

Your menaces are vain, man! I tell you again, I do not fear you! I will beg no pity from you—I dare endure more than you dare inflict!

I am not to be braved from my purpose! The basis of nature is more unshaken! High as your courage is, you will find a spirit in me that can mount still higher!

Courage? Oh shame! Name it not! Where was your courage when you decoyed my defender from me? The man you durst not face?—Where is he!—What have you done with him?—Laura has given you my letter—Should your practices have reached his life!—But no!—It cannot be! An act so very vile as that not even the errors of your mind could reach!—Courage?—Even me you durst not face in freedom! Your courage employed a band of ruffians against me, singly; a woman too, over whom your manly valour would tower! But there is no such mighty difference as prejudice supposes. Courage
has

has neither sex nor form : it is an energy of mind, of which your base proceedings shew I have infinitely the most. This bids me stand firm, and meet your worst daring undauntedly ! This be assured will make me the victor ! I tell you, man, it places me above you !

Urge me no more !—Beware of me ! You have driven me mad ! Do not tempt a desperate man ! Resistance will be destruction to you, no matter that to me it be perdition ! My account is closed, and I am reconciled to ruin !—You shall be mine !—Though hell gape for me, you shall be mine !—Once more beware ! I warn you not to contend !

Why, man, what would you do ? Is murder your intent ?—While I have life I fear you not !—And think you that brutality can taint the dead ? Nay, think you that, were you endowed with the superior force which the vain name of man supposes, and could accomplish the basest purpose of your heart, I would falsely take guilt to myself ; or imagine I had received the
smallest

smallest blemish, from impurity which never reached my mind? That I would lament, or shun the world, or walk in open day oppressed by shame I did not merit? No!—For you perhaps I might weep, but for myself I would not shed a tear! Not a tear!—You cannot injure me—I am above you!—If you mean to deal me blows or death, here I stand ready to suffer: but till I am dead, or senseless, I defy you to do me harm!—Bethink you, Clifton! I see the struggles of your soul: there is virtue among them. Your eye speaks the reluctance of your hand. Your heart spurns at the mischief your passions would perpetrate! — Remember — Unless you have recourse to some malignant, some cruel, some abominable means, you never shall accomplish so base a purpose! —But you cannot be so guilty, Clifton! —You cannot!—I know not by what perverse fatality you have been misled, for you have a mind fitted for the sublimest emanations of virtue!—No, you cannot!—There is something within you that lays too strong a hand upon you! Malice so
black

black is beyond you! Your very soul abhors its own guilt, and is therefore driven frantic!—Oh, Clifton! You that were born to be the champion of truth, the instructor of error, and the glory of the earth!—My heart yearns over you—Awake!—Rise!—Be a man!

Divine, angelic creature!—Fool, madman, villain!

With these exclamations I instantly burst from the chamber—Conviction, astonishment, remorse, tenderness, all the passions that could subdue the human soul rushed upon me, till I could support no more.

Of all the creatures God ever formed she is the most wonderful!—I have repeated something like her words; but had you seen her gestures, her countenance, her eye, her glowing indignant fortitude at one moment, and her kindling comprehensive benevolence the next, like me you would have felt an irresistible impulse to catch some spark of a flame so heavenly!—

And

And now what is to be done ! I am torn by contending passions !—If I release her there is an end to all ; except to my disgrace, which will be everlasting——Give her to the arms of Henley ?—I cannot bear it, Fairfax !—I cannot bear it !—Death, racks, infamy itself to such a thought were infinitude of bliss !

What can I do ? She says truly : conquest over her, by any but brutal means is impossible—Shall I be brutal ?—And more brutal even than my own ruffian agents ?

She has magnanimity—But what have those cyphers of beings who call themselves her relations ? Shall they mount the dunghill of their vanity, clap their wings, and exult, as if they too had conquered a Clifton ? Even the villain Mac Fane would not fail to scout at me ! Nay the very go-between, the convenient chambermaid herself, forgetting the lightness of her own heels, would bless herself and claim her share in the miraculous virtue of
the

the sex! What! Become the scoff of the tea-table, the bug-bear of the bed-chamber, and the standing jest of the tavern?—I will return this instant, Fairfax, and put her boasted strength and courage to the proof—Madness!—I forget that nothing less than depriving her of sense can be effectual. She knows her strong hold: victory never yet was gained by man, singly, over woman, who was not willing to be vanquished.

I will not yield her up, Fairfax!—She never shall be Henley's!—Again and again she never shall!—I dared not meet him!—So she told me!—Ha!—Dare not?—I will still devise a means—I will have my revenge!—This vaunted Henley then shall know how much I dare!—I will conquer! Should I be obliged to come like Jove to Semele, in flames, and should we both be reduced to ashes in the conflict, I will enjoy her!—Let one urn hold our dust; and when the fire has purified it of its angry and opposing particles, perhaps it may mingle in peace.

C. CLIFTON.

LETTER

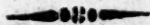
LETTER CXX.



COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

*London, Dover-Street.*

IT shall not be!—She shall not escape me thus!—I will not endure this insufferable, this contemptible recantation of my wrongs! Fear is beneath me, and what have I to hope? I have made misery certain! I have paid the price of destruction, and will hug it to my heart! I know how often I have prevaricated, and have loitered with revenge; but I have not lost the flame: it burns still, and never shall expire!—

The night at Brompton, though a night of storms and evil augury, was heaven to the

the one I have just passed. Sleep and rest have forsaken me. 'Tis long since I closed my eyes; I know not indeed when; but last night I did not attempt it. I traversed my room, opened my windows, shut them again, listened to the discontented monotony of the watchman without hearing him, thought over my never-forgotten injuries, my vengeance, and all the desolation that is to follow, and having ended began again!

There were shrieks and cries of murder in the street, about midnight; and this was the only music by which I remember to have been roused. But it was momentary. My reveries returned, and scenes of horror rose, more swarming, dun, and ghastly!

My waking dreams are eternal—Well, so I would have them!—They prolong revenge!—I would have him by the throat for ages!—Him!—Henley!—Would grapple with him; would stab and be stabbed; not in the fictions of a torturing fancy, but arm to arm, steel to steel, poison
son

son to poison! Ay, did I not know he would refuse my fair challenge, hero though he be and cased in innocence, I would instantly fly to let him loose upon me, that I might turn and tear him!—

Why that were delectable! And can it not be? Can no suffering move, no wrongs provoke, no taunts stir him to resentment? Is he God, or is he man? To me he is demon, legion, and has possessed me wholly!

Liar that I am! How came I to forget the beauteous forcerefs with whom I found him leagued? I have heard them called angels of light; but I have known them only fiends! They goad me with their virtues, mock at my phrensy, defy my rage; and though surrounded by rape, destruction, and despair, sleep and smile, while I awake and howl!

Injury and insult are busy with me!—
This sister of mine is in town at Sir Arthur's. As she has made the journey I
may

may expect a visit from her soon : but she shall find no admission here. I want no more tormentors !

As I foreboded, she has just been, and has behaved in character. She would take no denial from the valet ; he was but an infant to the Amazon ; she would herself see if I were at home, and in she came.— The fellow does not want cunning, and he ran up stairs before her, and called out aloud, purposely for me to hear her —
“ You may see, madam, if you please ;
“ the door is locked, and my master has
“ taken the key with him.”

He knew I was determined not to see her, and while he designedly made all the clatter he could, and placed himself before the entrance, I took the means he had devised. She came, turned him aside, examined the door, pushed violently against it, and I believe would willingly have broken it open ; but finding her good intentions, I set my shoulder to the
1 panel,

panel, taking care not to impede the light through the keyhole, which my valet tells me was inspected by her. She ruminated a few seconds and then went away ; incredulous and high in indignation.

Well !—I fought for warfare, and it has found me. My former encounters it seems were but the skirmishes of a partisan ; this is a deadly and decisive battle !

It is now five o'clock, and I have had a stirring morning. So much the better ; action is relief. A message came to me from Lord Fitz-Allen, desiring to speak with me. I had an inclination not to have gone ; but reflecting further I determined to obey his summons.

However, when I sent up my name, I desired to know if my sister were there ; and was answered in the negative. I then made my bow to his lordship, taking care to inform him that my sister behaved with great impropriety, and that I was resolved not to see her, lest I too should forget that
respect

respect due to my family and myself which she had violated. The peer began with circumlocutory hints concerning the elopement—"An unaccountable affair!—No "tidings had yet arrived!—Surmises and "rumours of a very strange and dishonorable nature were whispered!—Mis- "chief, rape, nay even murder were "dreaded!"

I refused to interpret any of these insinuations as applicable to myself. At last his lordship, after many efforts, said he had a favour to beg of me, which he hoped I should not think unreasonable. I desired him to inform me what this favour was; and put some firmness in my manner, that his lordship might see I was not in a temper to suffer an insult.

He answered, for his own part, he had no doubts: he knew my family, and had always affirmed I could not act unworthy of the gentleman. But, for the peace of mind of Sir Arthur and the other relations of the young lady, he would esteem it an obligation done to him, if I would declare,

upon my honour, that I knew nothing of her elopement ; of the place she has been conveyed to, or where she is at present.

I then retorted upon his lordship, that the preface to this request entirely precluded compliance ; that those who whispered and spread surmises, and rumours, must be answerable for the consequences of their own officiousness ; and that with respect to myself, I should certainly, under such circumstances, refuse to answer to interrogatories.

My tone was not very conciliatory, and his lordship knew not whether to be angry or pleased. But while he was pondering I thought proper to make my exit ; and leave him to settle the contest between his pride and his puerility as well as he was able.

At my return I found a letter from my sister, which I will neither answer nor open. I have my fill of fury, and want no more !

Damnation on their insolence ! They
have

have been making application to the office at Bow-Street ! A request has just been sent me, a very soft and civil one, it is true, from the sitting magistrate, that I would do him the honour to come and speak a word with him, on an affair that concerned a very great and respectable family. I returned for answer that I was engaged, and that I should notice no such messages: but that if any man, great or small, had to complain of me, the law understood its duty, and that I should be readily found at all times.

Whether this be the motion of my superb and zealous sister, or of the arrogant peer, is more than I can divine. But I shall know some day, and shall then perhaps strike a balance.

I have no doubt that emissaries and scouts are abroad, and that I am watched. I was this evening to have met Mac Fane at the Shakespeare ; but I will not go. Yet as it is pay night, the hungry scoundrel must not be disappointed. I will therefore write a note to him, and invite

him to come and sup with me. He will be an agreeable companion ! But even his company is better, at this moment, than solitude.

I will not let my servant carry the note directly to him ; for if they have their spies in the field, that might be dangerous. He shall take it to the Mount coffee-house, and there get a chairman to convey it in safety. I will tell Mac Fane likewise to come through the shop door ; for I am only in lodgings ; and to step immediately out of a hackney-coach. I laugh at their counterplots, and wish I had nothing more to disturb me than the fear of being detected by any exertion of their cunning, even though my kind sister be appointed their commander in chief.

C. CLIFTON.

P. S. They might have served the cause in which they have engaged more effectually, had their proceedings been less violent and offensive. They do but nerve me in resolution. The less public they had made

made the affair, the more they would have shewn their generalship. If they be thus determined to brand me, can they suppose that my vengeance shall not outstrip theirs? I own I am perplexed about the means—Invention fails me! I have debated whether I should call in the aid of Mac Fane; but the idea is too detestable!—No! I would rather take a pair of pistols, and dispatch her first and myself next, than expose her beauties to such ruffian despicable rascals!—Beside I would have her will concerned—And how to conquer that?—I shall be driven, I foresee I shall, to some unheard-of act of desperation!—Drugs are a mean, a pitiful expedient: not to mention that she is aware of them, and uses a kind of caution which it would be difficult to overcome. She reserves the meal of one day for the next, after having suffered Laura to eat her part; so that inanity, sleep, or other effects, if produced, would first appear in the maid. This perhaps is one of the reasons by which she is induced still to keep her: and

were she removed, and could suspect it were for this purpose, I am convinced she would eat no more—No! She must be fairly told the deep despair of my mind! and if that will not move her, why then—Death!

LETTER CXXI.

LOUISA CLIFTON

TO HER BROTHER

COKE CLIFTON.

Grosvenor-Street.

WHERE is Anna St. Ives?—Where is my friend? Where is the youth to whom you owe existence?—Man of revenge, answer me! Oh God! Oh God!—Is it possible?—Can it be that you, Coke Clifton, the son of my mother, the hoped for friend of my heart, the expected champion

pion of virtue, can turn aside to such base and pitiful vice ; such intolerable, such absurd, such deep hypocrisy ? And why ? What cause ? Is this the reward of their uncommon virtues ?

And you, Oh man ! Did they not labor hourly, incessantly, with the purity of saints and the ardour of angels, to do you good ? Was it not their sole employment ; their first duty, and their dearest hope ? Did they ever deviate ? Did they not return urbanity for arrogance, kindness for contempt, and life for blows ?—Can you, Clifton, dare you be thus wicked ? And will you persist ?—

If you have brought them to harm, if your practices have reached their lives, earth does not contain so foul, so wicked a monster !—

Surely this cannot be ! Surely you have some drop of mother's blood in you, and cannot be actuated by a spirit so wholly demon !

What shall I do ? What shall I say ? How shall I awaken a soul so steeped in

iniquity, so dead to excellence, so obstinate in ill?—Clifton!—You were not formed for this! You have a mind that might have been the fit companion of divine natures!—It may be still!—Awake! View the light, and turn from crimes, pollution, and abhorrence, to virtue, love, and truth!

Know you not the beaming charity of her whom you persecute, if—Oh God!—Surely this is vain terror! Surely Anna St. Ives is still among the living!—

Clifton, once again I say, remember the untainted benevolence of her soul! Is it, can it be forgotten by you? Which of your good qualities was ever forgotten by her? Hear her describe them in her own language!*

These

* Here follow numerous extracts from the letters of Anna St. Ives; all expressive of the high qualities and powers of Mr. Clifton, of the delight they gave her, and the hopes they inspired. They are omitted here, because it is probable they are fresh in the reader's memory: if not, it will be easy to turn to Anna's letters; particularly to letters XXIV. XXXI. XXXVIII. XLV. LVI. LXIII. LXVIII. LXXVIII. LXXIX.

These are a few of the commendations with which her descriptions abound. Commendations of you, oh man of mischief and mistake! They are quotations from her letters. Read them; remember them; think on all she has done for you, all she has said for you, and all you have made her suffer!

What shall I say? My fears are infinite, my hopes few, my anguish intolerable!—For the love of God, brother, do not rob the world of two people who were born to be its light and pride! Do not be this diabolic instrument of passion and error! If they still have being, restore them to the human race.—You know not the wrong you do!—'Tis heinous, 'tis hateful wickedness! Can a mind like yours feel no momentary remorse, no glow of returning virtue, no sudden resolution to perform a great and glorious act of justice on yourself?

If you value your soul's peace, hear me!

Awake from this guilty dream, and be
once more the brother of the agonizing

L. CLIFTON.

LETTER CXXII.

LOUISA CLIFTON

TO

MRS. WENBOURNE.

Grosvenor-Street.

DEAR MADAM,

YOU have been kindly pleased to request I would give you some account of the means we are pursuing, in hopes to obtain traces that should lead to a discovery of the very strange affair by which we are all perplexed and afflicted. I am sorry to say, that I can do little more than narrate
the

the distress of the various parties, who think themselves interested in the loss of the dear friend of my heart, and of the youth so well worthy of her affections.

Of the grief of Sir Arthur, madam, you have yourself been a witness: nor does it seem to abate. I should wonder indeed if it could; for though I wish to cherish hope, I own that the secrecy and silence with which this black stratagem has been carried into effect are truly terrifying.

Highly as I esteem and reverence the virtues of young Mr. Henley, I have been free enough to own to you, madam, I never was any admirer of the qualities and proceedings of his father. Justice however obliges me to say that he at present expresses a regret so deep, for the loss of his son, as to prove that he has a considerable sense of his worth. Money has been the sole object of his efforts: yet, though his son had so great a sum in his possession at the time he disappeared, he seems to think but little of the money, compared

to the loss which is indeed so infinitely more deplorable.

While I live I shall love and esteem Mrs. Clarke, and her niece Peggy; whose kind hearts overflow with affection, both for my Anna St. Ives and young Mr. Henley. Well indeed may Peggy remember poor Frank. He was her saviour in the hour of her distress. She takes no rest herself, nor will she suffer her husband or her brother to take any. They are all continually on the watch; and to do the men justice, they do not need a spur.

Mr. Webb, her brother, with whose unfortunate history I suppose you are acquainted, gives proofs of zeal which are very affecting. The tears have frequently gushed from me, at seeing the virtuous anxiety of his mind, and at recollecting what that mind was, how and by whom it was preserved, and that its whole activity is now exerted, with the strong and cheering hope of returning some portion of the good it has received!

I know, madam, how great your sorrow must

must be, as well as that of all the once happy relations of a young lady of endowments and virtues so rare. Yet deep as this sorrow is, I think it scarcely can exceed the anguish I feel; convinced as I am that my mistaken, my unhappy brother is the cause of this much dreaded misery.

I told you, madam, I would go to him. I have been, and could gain no admission. I have written; and have received no answer. These circumstances, added to the perturbation of mind which was so discoverable in him when he was last at Rose-Bank, do but confirm my fears of his guilt.

But as it becomes us to act, and not to lament, while there is any possibility that action should give us relief, I joined Mr. Abimelech Henley in his opinion, that we ought to apply to the civil power for redress. We first indeed prevailed on Lord Fitz-Allen to speak to Mr. Clifton; but it was to no purpose: my brother behaved, as I prophesied he would, with disdainful silence. I own I had some hopes that my
letter

letter would have touched his heart : I am sorry to find they were so ill-founded.

Mr. Clifton having refused even to deny his knowledge of the affair to his Lordship, he consented that application should be made to a civil magistrate. But Lord Fitz-Allen is strangely prejudiced, and is persuaded, or affects to be, that Mr. Clifton, being a gentleman, is incapable of a dishonourable act ; and that young Mr. Henley and Anna St. Ives have eloped.—The sum of money Mr. Henley had it in his possession confirms him in his opinion : and he has several times half persuaded Sir Arthur, and some others, to be of his sentiments.

Hearing this, and finding no positive accusation, and that nothing but surmise could be preferred against Mr. Clifton, whose character was understood to be highly vindictive, the magistrate refused to do any thing more than send a polite request, that he would come and speak in his presence to the parties concerned.

My brother refused in terms of menace
and

and defiance ; and we returned home hopeless ; yet again having recourse to watching the door of my brother's lodgings, as has been done for these several days. But we have learnt nothing. And what indeed can we learn ? Mr. Webb and his brother-in-law have twice followed him on foot, to the livery stables ; and have seen him mount his horse, and ride out of town : but the speed with which he went quickly took him out of sight.

The roads he chose were in opposite directions, but that they might easily be, and yet lead to the same place. They are out at present ; for their industry is unwearied.

It is in vain to think of pursuing my brother on horseback ; for he must infallibly see his pursuer. He went one time over Westminster-bridge, and the other through Tyburn-turnpike up to Paddington. Their present project is, the first time he goes out, to waylay both these roads, and get assistants. Mr. Webb is a swift runner : but the chance of success I
am

am afraid is very small indeed! However it becomes them, and us, and indeed every body, not to desist, till the whole of this dark transaction be brought to light.

I am, madam, &c.

L. CLIFTON.

LETTER CXXIII.

COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

London, Dover Street.

WHY ay! He who opens the flood-gates of mischief is necessarily in most danger of being swept away by the torrent!—I have drunken deeply of ruin, and soon shall have my fill!

You warned me to beware of this raven; you told me he scented carrion!—I laughed

ed at your prophecy !—It was fulfilled !—
I am a gull !—The fleeced, cheated, despicable gull of the infernal villain Mac Fane !

It was right that I should be loaded with every species of contempt for myself. I have been the fool, the gudgeon, the ineffable ass to lose a sum of money to him, which to pay would be destruction !—I begin to hate myself with most strange inveteracy ! Could I meet such another fellow, I would spit in his face—Fairfax, it is true—By hell I hold myself in most rooted and ample antipathy !

I find I have strangely mistaken my own character and talents—I once thought to have driven the world before me, and to have whipped opposition into immediate compliance : but it seems I am myself one of the very sorry wretches at whom I was so all alive and ready to gibe, and spurn ! These are odd and unaccountable things ! And it appears that I am a very poor creature ! A most indubitable driveller ! The twin-brother of imbecility ! Ay, the counterpart

terpart and compeer of Edward St. Ives, and the tool of the most barefaced of cheats, as well as his familiar !—Well ! I have lived long enough to make this discovery ; and it is now high time to depart !

I wrote to you but yesterday : but events hastily tread on each other's heels, and if I do not relate them now I never shall.—I told you I expected the gambler to supper, by our own invitation—Ay, ay !—I am a very Solomon !—

I dined at home. I know not indeed to what extremes the St. Ives hunters might proceed : or whether they would make accusation upon oath, sufficient to authorise a magistrate in granting a warrant, to bring me before him ; but the attempt must have been impotent and abortive, I therefore determined to brave them : however I heard no more of them or their suspicions.

As I sat ruminating on past events, on my sister and her epistle, and particularly on the zeal with which Anna St. Ives appealed to the letter written by her, which
I had

I had received from Laura, my curiosity was so far excited that at last I determined to read them both. I own, Fairfax, they both moved me!—This sister of mine, enraged as I am against her, has somehow found the art of making herself respected. Her zeal has character and efficacy in it: I mean persuasion. I could not resist some of the sensations she intended to inspire. She cited passages from the letters of her friend that were daggers to me! At the very time I was seeking to quarrel with Anna, she angel-like was incessant in my praise!—And such praises, Fairfax—! There was no resisting it!—She thought generously, nobly, ay sublimely of me: while my irascible jealousy, false pride, and vindictive spirit were eager only to find cause of offence!

And yet I know not!—I cannot keep my mind to a point!—Surely *I had cause of offence*: real cause?—Surely the retribution I sought had justice in it?—She could not be wholly blameless?—No!—That would indeed be distraction!

I then

I then ventured to read the letter of Anna—On paper or in speech she is the same : energetic, awful, and affecting !

While I was reading this last, Mac Fane entered, and soon put an end to my meditations. Did I tell you I had been fool enough to invite him to supper?—He had not been with me half an hour before I was most intolerably weary of his company !

After having vapoured of the feats of himself and the scowling rascal his colleague, to remind me of my high obligations to them, and talking as usual with most bitter malevolence against Henley, he soon began to descant on the old subject, gaming——To ask a madman why he is mad were vain ! I was importuned by his jargon—“ He had been pigeoned “ only last night of no less than seven “ hundred pounds ! ” Repetitions, imprecations, and lies, all of the same kind, succeeded as fast as he could utter them !

I know all this ought to have put me upon my guard ; and I know too that it did

did not. I believe I had some lurking vanity in my mind ; a persuasion that I could beat him at picquet. I was weary both of myself and him ; was primed for mischief, and cared not of what kind. If you ask me for any better reason, why, knowing him as I did, I suffered myself to be the tool of this fellow, I can only say I have none to give !

I ordered my own servant to fetch half a dozen packs of cards, and imagined this precaution was some security. What will not men imagine, when their passions are afloat and reason is flown ?

To give you the history of how I was led on, from one act of idiotism to another, or how after having lost one thousand I could be lunatic enough to lose a second, and after a second a third, and so on to a tenth, is more than my present temper of mind will permit. It is quite sufficient to tell you that I have ruined myself ; and that there is not, upon the face of the earth, a fellow I so thoroughly despise as Coke Clifton ; no not even Mac Fane himself !

himself! Below the lowest am I fallen; for I am his dupe, nay his companion, and what is worse his debtor! It is time I were out of the world—So miserable a being does not crawl upon its surface.

It is the very heyday of mischief, and I must abroad among it. The exact manner of the catastrophe I cannot foresee, but it must be tragical. I have something brooding in my mind, the outlines of a conclusion, which rather pleases me. I have sworn to avenge myself of Anna, disinherit my sister, and never to pay Mac Fane.—These oaths must be kept. Anna must fall! If she will but deign to live afterward, she shall be my heir. And for myself, I know how to find a ready quietus!

My mind since this last affair is better reconciled to its destiny, and even less disturbed than before: for previous to this, there seemed to be some bare possibility of a generous release, on my part, and a more generous forgetfulness of injuries on theirs. But now, all is over! I have but to punish
my

my opponents a little, and myself much, and having punished expire.

C. CLIFTON.

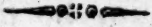
P. S. I have not paid the scoundrel his thousand pounds. He proposed a bond for the whole, on which he said he could raise money. This I was determined not to give, and told him he must wait a few days, till I had consulted my lawyer and looked into my affairs, and I would then give him a determinate answer. He was beginning to assume the contemptible airs of a bully; but I was in no temper to bear the least insult. The real rage of my look silenced the mechanical ferocity of his. I bade him remember I could hit a china plate, and that I should think proper to take my own mode of payment. He then changed his tone, and began to commend his soul to Satan, in a thousand different forms, if he had ever won a hundred pounds at a sitting in his whole life before. I sneered in his face, shewed him the door, and bade him good night; and he walked quietly away.

LETTER

LETTER CXXIV.


LOUISA CLIFTON

TO

MRS. WENBOURNE.
*Grosvenor-Street.*

DEAR MADAM,

AS I have taken upon myself the painful duty of informing you of all that passes, relative to this unhappy affair, it becomes me to be punctual. It is afflicting to own that our agitation and distress, instead of abating, are increased.

Finding it impossible to gain a sight of my brother, I determined to attempt to question his valet. Mr. Webb received my instructions accordingly, watched him to some distance from the house, and delivered a message from me, that if he would come to me I would present him with ten guineas.

He

He made no hesitation, but followed Mr. Webb immediately.

Either he is very artful or very ignorant of this affair. One circumstance excepted, he appears to know nothing.

I promised him any reward, any sum he should himself name, if he could but give us such information as might lead to the recovery of our lost friends : but he protested very solemnly he had none to give ; except that he owns having been employed, by his master, to inveigle the lad away, who wrote the anonymous letter, and whom Mr. Clifton, by practising on the lad's credulity and gratitude, sent to France.

The valet indeed acknowledges his master is exceeding disturbed in mind ; that he does not sleep, nor even go to bed, except some times tossing himself on it with his clothes on, and almost instantly rising again ; and that he has sent for his attorney, to make his will.

I will not endeavour to paint my sensations at hearing this account. I will only

add that another incident has happened, which gives them additional acuteness.

I believe, madam, you have heard both my brother and my Anna speak of and describe a young French nobleman, who paid his addressee to her, and who was the occasion of the rash leap into the lake, by which Mr. Clifton endangered his life? This gentleman, Count de Beaunoir, is arrived in London; and has this morning paid a visit to Sir Arthur St. Ives.

He enquired first and eagerly after my friend; with whom, like all who know her, he is in raptures. Sir Arthur, forgetting his character, and the apparently rodomontade but to him very serious manner in which he had declared himself her champion, told him the whole story, as far as it is known to us; not omitting to mention Mr. Clifton as the person on whom all our suspicions fell, and relating to him the full grounds of those suspicions.

The astonishment of the Count occasioned him to listen with uncommon attention to what he heard: and he closed the narrative

narrative of Sir Arthur by affirming it was all true. He was convinced beyond contradiction of its truth, for he had himself brought over the lad, whom Mr. Clifton had sent, with pretended dispatches, to a friend of his in Paris.

The lad it appears, suspecting all was not right, and finding no probability of returning, but on the contrary that he was watched, and even refused a passport, had applied to the Count through the medium of his servants, with whom he had formerly been acquainted, to protect and afford him the means of returning to England.

The lad was sent for, his story heard, and he was then questioned concerning Anna St. Ives ; and he had heard enough of the affair from Mr. Abimelech Henley, and from the servants, to know that the proposed match, between Mr. Clifton and Anna, was broken off ; and that she refused to admit his visits. When Count de Beaunoir last saw Sir Arthur, at Paris, he had assured him very seriously that, should ever Anna St. Ives find herself disengaged

and he knew it, he would instantly make her a tender of his hand and fortune : and he had no sooner heard the lady's story than he determined immediately to make his intended journey to England.

My heart shudders while I relate it, but I dread lest it should be a fatal journey, for him or my brother, or both ! For he declared to Sir Arthur, without hesitation, he would wait on Mr. Clifton directly; and oblige him either to produce Anna St. Ives, or meet him in the field.

Wretched folly ! Destructive error !—When will men cease to think that vice and virtue ought to meet on equal terms ; and that injury can be atoned by blood ?

The Count had left his address with Sir Arthur, and the moment I heard what had passed I flew to his lodgings. He was not at home, and I waited above an hour. At last he came, and I attempted to shew him both the folly and wickedness of the conduct he was pursuing.

He listened to me with the utmost politeness, paid me a thousand compliments, acknowledged

acknowledged the truth of every thing I said, but very evidently determined to act in a manner directly opposite. I very assiduously laboured to make him promise, upon his honour, he would not seek redress by duelling ; but in vain. He answered by evasion ; with all possible desire to have obliged me, but with a foregone conclusion that it could not be.

Pardon me, madam, for writing a narrative so melancholy : but sincerity is necessary ; intelligence might have come to you in a distorted form, and might have produced much worse effects. For my own part, I have no other mode of conduct but that of writing and of speaking the simple truth ; being convinced there is no shade of disguise, artifice, or falsehood, that is not immoral in principle, and pernicious in practice.

I have been very busy. I have sent for the lad whom the count brought over with him, and have made enquiries. The answers he gave me all tend to confirm our former suspicions. He has related the

story, at length, of the manner in which he was inveigled away, and prevailed on to go to France.

I next questioned him concerning his aunt; and he knows nothing of her, has never heard from her, and is astonished at what can have become of her. He means, however, to go this evening to a relation's house, where he thinks he is certain that he shall hear of her; and has then promised to come and let me know——But to what purpose? We shall find she has been sent out of the way by Mr. Clifton: and what further information will that afford?——None, except to confirm what needs no confirming; except to shew the blindness, craft, and turpitude of his mind!

I am, dear madam, &c.

L. CLIFTON.

LETTER

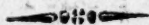
LETTER CXXV.



COKE CLIFTON.

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

*London, Dover Street.*

SO, Fairfax, you have suffered the lad to escape you ; cautioned and entreated as you were ! You know, I suppose, by what means ; and with whom he is at present ?—Well, well !—It is no matter—I have quarrels enough on hand, and enemies enough !—I would fain die in peace with somebody !—I forgive you—I suppose you did your best.

It is exceedingly possible that this may be the last letter you will ever receive from me. Remember me now and then. Should Henley and Anna St. Ives survive me, let

them know I was not so entirely blind to their worth as they might perhaps suppose. Shew them my letters if you will: I care not who sees them now! Let the truth be told! I shall be deaf enough to censure.

I have just had a visit from the crazy count; a threatening one. A challenge has passed, and we are to meet to-morrow.

So it is agreed; but I doubt whether I shall keep the appointment. If there be one spark of resentment in the soul of Henley, it is possible I may fail. I mean to give him the first chance. It is his by right; and why should not I do right even to him, once in my life? This farrago of folly, this pride of birth, and riches, and I know not what else lumber, is very contemptible!

Fairfax, the present state of my thoughts forces more than one truth upon me. But what have I to do with truth, in a world from which I learned so much error that it was impossible for me to exist in it? These wise people should leave us fools to wrangle,

gle, be wretched, and cut each other's throats as we list, without intermeddling: 'tis dangerous. But Truth is a zealot; Wisdom will be crying in the streets; and Folly meeting her seldom fails to deal her blow.

My mind is made up: my affairs are settled, my lawyer has written out my will, and it is signed. You will find yourself mentioned in it, Fairfax. I have nominated my sister my executor, and Anna St. Ives my heir. I have been reading Louisa's letter again: it is full of pathos. She has more understanding than I have been willing to allow, and I have relented. She is not forgotten in my will: I would not have her think of me with everlasting hatred.

I know not how it is, Fairfax, but I feel more compunction, at present, than I ever remember to have felt before. I am grown into self-contempt; and the haughty notions, which were the support of my high and sometimes arrogant conduct, are faded. I could think only of

Coke Clifton, and I now know Coke Clifton to be a very wretched dolt !

Be not deceived by my present tone : make no false predictions in favour either of myself or Anna St. Ives. Despair and fate are not more fixed than is my plan. My horse will presently be at the door. I shall mount him the moment I have ended this letter, and shall proceed directly to Anna. There, after all is ended, the enchantment too shall end, and the misadventurous lady and her imprisoned knight shall both be set free.

Should Henley, urged by despair to seek revenge, accept my defiance and meet me in the field, the conflict must be fierce, and such as might inspire terror.

To say the truth, were it not to prove myself his equal, perhaps his master and vanquisher, I would not lift my hand against his life. It would be some relief to my soul to fall by his arm. He is a noble fellow, and I have done him wrong. Would he or Anna but charitably strike, I would die blessing them, eased by the
expiatory

expiatory blow. Perhaps they are the only two beings for whom I ever could have had the same admiration; and, if what they tell me be true, admiration continued always ripens into love. They shewed affection toward me, and would, I believe, have loved me. But we did not understand each other, and the mistake has been mutually fatal—Would I had never injured them!—But it is vain!—The die is cast!—We are all fated!—Having accomplished my revenge, and accomplish it I will, they cannot live and not be miserable! They must curse my hated memory, and blaspheme against my honour!—It cannot be otherwise—Let our grave therefore be glorious! They are brave spirits, and will mock my power even to the last. I love their high courage. Perhaps they shall find I have a kindred soul!—Oh would they die forgiving me—!

I know not well whither my thoughts are wandering—They perhaps may refuse to die—They may say it is their duty to live, even though doomed to be wretched

—I know them—What they think they will act—Well, well!—Let destiny dispose of events—To me all chances are welcome, all are alike.

As to this count, should Henley refuse vengeance, I owe him no mercy. 'Twas he who prompted me to the frantic act that first made me the debtor of the man I have most injured. I almost condemn a foe so insignificant—Not that he is deficient in bravery, or skill—But what is he?—What are his wrongs?—'Tis lunacy, not anger rankling at his heart!—Or if it were?—The hungry wolf-dog is no fit combatant for the famished lion!

C. CLIFTON.

P. S. Fairfax, a new terror has come over me. I told you of the letters of my sister and Anna, and described something of the effect they produced upon me. You may remember I read them previous to my last damned interview with the villain Mac Fane. I recollect having laid the letter of Anna upon the table, and that it

continued

continued lying there for some time after his entrance. I had my eye upon it, and meant not to put it in my pocket lest it should be left there, but lock it up as soon as I moved—I forgot it—The letter is lost—I have searched every where, have enquired, have cursed; have threatened unheard of punishment to my scoundrel, if he have purloined it; but to no effect. He protests he knows nothing of it; and he looks as if he spoke truth—it contained a secret relative to Henley—! Should Mac Fane have taken it up furtively, as I suppose such thieves are always on the watch—? Why, if he should—? Hell hounds!—Blood-thirsty vultures!—If so—! I will be gone this instant!—It is the very æra of horror!

FRAG-

FRAGMENT.*

WHETHER what I am about to write may ever be found, or whether I the writer may ever be heard of more, are both very doubtful events. It may be of some use to mankind, should this brief narrative hereafter be read; as it may tend to exemplify the progress of the passions, and to shew after having begun in error the excesses of which they are capable. I speak under the supposition that this paper may fall into the hands of persons who know more of Mr. Clifton, and of the affair to which I allude, than even I myself at present know; or, if I did, than I have time and opportunity to relate.

With

* Written by Mr. Henley in his confinement, and taken from the wainscot in which it was concealed after the catastrophe.

With that hope, and addressing myself to such persons, I will endeavour, as long as I have the means and am able, accurately to recount the particulars of what has befallen me, from the time I was first beset to the latest minute of my remaining where I am; whether my removal happen by death or release; of which, though apparently beyond hope, it would certainly be wrong to despair.

Oh, Anna St. Ives! Should thine eye ever glance over this paper, ignorant as I am of thy destiny, though too well assured it is a fearful one, think not, while I seem to narrate those incidents only which have happened to myself, that I am attentive to self alone; that I have forgotten the nobler duties of which we have so often sweetly discoursed; or that the memory of thee and thy sufferings has ever been absent from my heart!—But why bid thee be just? To whom didst thou ever do a wilful wrong? Oh pardon me!—Live on, shouldst thou still be permitted to live, and labour with redoubled ardour in the
great

great cause of truth ! Despair not ! Heave not a sigh, drop not a tear ; but sacrifice thy private ills to public good !

Before I begin, it is necessary to notice that I had the sum of eight thousand pounds about me, in bank-bills : for it is this circumstance which seems to have insured my death. Our walk was to have ended by four o'clock, and the money to have been left at the banker's as we returned. I cannot however acquit myself of neglect. I ought not to have forgotten that money, under our present wretched system, is the grand stimulus to vice ; that accidents very little dreamed of daily happen ; and that procrastination is always an error.

As I was walking with the lady whose name I have just mentioned, in some fields between Kensington and Brompton, we saw Mr. Clifton pass on horseback, and I believe in less than a minute a man assaulted him, and fire a pistol, with an intent to rob him as I then supposed.

I ran

I ran to his aid ; and, immediately after the flight of this real or imaginary robber, I was myself attacked, and laid senseless, by a blow I received on the side of my head ; which, as there was no person in front able to strike at me, must have come from behind.

I saw no more at that time of Mr. Clifton. The blow was very violent, and is still severely felt.

When I recovered my senses, I found my arms confined by a straight waistcoat ; such as are used to secure maniacs. I endeavoured to call for assistance, but the man who had charge of me, for there were several, thrust his thumb in the larynx, forced open my mouth, and gagged me. He has twice had occasion, as he supposed, to use me thus ; and both times with such violence as seemingly to require the utmost effort mind could make, to recover respiration ; the thrust of his thumb was so merciless, and the sensation of strangling so severe.

They brought me to a house thoroughly
prepared

prepared for confinement. It is an old but heavy building, walled round, and provided with bars, bolts, chains, massy locks, and every precaution to impede escape.

I was led up one pair of stairs, to apartments consisting of two chambers; the one roomy, the other much smaller; in which last is a bed.

As soon as I was safe in the room, the master man among them, who as I have since learned is a professed keeper of the insane, ungagged me, took off the straight waistcoat, and then they all left me.

I stood I know not how long in that stupor of amazement which the scene, and the crowding conjectures of imagination, necessarily produced.

At length, I roused my mind to more active enquiry. I then set myself to inspect the apartments. In the largest there was a fire place, and a fire; but neither shovel, tongs nor poker; except a small stick as a substitute for a poker, with which I certainly could not knock a man down. The
furniture

furniture consisted of a chair, a table, a broken looking-glass, and an old picture, in panel, of the sacrifice of Isaac, with Abraham's knife at his throat. It stares me now in the face, and is a strong emblem of my own situation; except that my saving angel seems wanting.

In the other room, exclusive of the bed and its appurtenances, there was a second chair, which with an old walnut-tree clothes-press was its whole inventory.

In this room was a closet, with several shelves almost to the ceiling; the topmost of them so high as but just to be reached by me, when standing on a chair. I swept my hand along the shelves, and found them as I thought empty.

I then examined the windows. There were only two, one to each room; the remainder having been walled up; and these each of them provided with thick iron bars, so near to each other as to admit but of a small part of the face passing between them. There was a casement to the front room only; and I found a piece of paper
tied

“ tied to the handle of it, on which was written—“ You are closely watched: if
“ you attempt to make any signals, or
“ shout, or take any other means to inform
“ persons you are here, your lodging will
“ be changed to one much more disagree-
“ able.”

Having nothing with which I could employ myself except my thoughts, and these flowing in abundance, I sat meditating and undisturbed till it was almost dark. A little before five o'clock as I suppose, perhaps later, for I forgot to say my watch and purse had been taken from me, with a promise that they should be returned, I heard the sound of distant bolts and locks, that belong to the outer gates and doors, and soon afterward of men in loud conversation.

The keeper and two of his assistants came up to me, and once more brought the straight waistcoat, into which they bade me thrust my arms. I hesitated, and told them I did not choose to have my arms confined, To which the keeper replied—

“ B*** my b**** eyes! None of your
“ jabber, or I’ll fetch you another rum
“ one! I’ll knock you off the roof
“ again!”

From this speech I conclude it was he who gave me the blow with the bludgeon, when I was first secured.

As he said this, he raised his bludgeon; with which kind of weapon they were all three armed, and had locked the door after them. There was no remedy, and I obeyed.

As soon as they had confined my arms they left me, and remembering the bank-notes which I had in my fob, I began to fear they had come to the knowledge of this circumstance; though I could not imagine by what means. Some short time afterward, perhaps a quarter of an hour, the bolts and chains of my door again began to rattle, and one person singly came in. It was dark, and I could not distinguish his features, but I recollected his form: it was the gambler Mac Fane, the sound of his voice presently put it beyond a doubt.

Without speaking a word, he came up to me and made a violent blow at me. I perceived it coming, sprang upward, and received it on the tip of my shoulder, his hand driving up to my neck. From his manner, I guess it hurt him at least as much as me ; for his passion immediately became outrageous, and he began cursing, kicking, spitting at me, and treating me with various other indignities, which are wholly unworthy of remembrance.

His passion was so loud and vehement that the keeper, hearing him, came up. Just as he entered, Mac Fane struck me again, and with more effect, for he knocked me down ; and was proceeding to kick me in a manner that might perhaps have been fatal, had not the keeper interfered.

I said not one word the whole time, nor as I recollect uttered any sound whatever ; and it was with difficulty that the keeper, who is even a more powerful man than himself, could get him away.

I was once more left in solitude and darkness ; and thus sat, with fresh subjects
for

for reflection, ruminating on this worthless Mac Fane, my rencontre with him and Mr. Clifton, the extreme malignancy of his temper, and all the connecting circumstances that are allied to events which I cannot know relate.

About eight o'clock my door once more opened, and a little boy of fourteen years of age, as he tells me, brought me a light and some food. The boy imagined me to be mad, and entered the room with great reluctance, his master the keeper standing at the door, cursing him, threatening him with the horsewhip, and obliging him to do as he was bidden ! which was to release me from the straight waistcoat, spread a threadbare half-dirty napkin over the table, set the plates, and wait till I had eaten. The trepidation of the poor boy at setting my arms at liberty was extreme.

The door was not open but ajar, and secured by three chains, between which the boy crept ; the keeper standing and looking on, with one arm leaning on the middle chain, and his head only in the chamber.

I ob-

I observed that the boy had an intelligent countenance, though considerably under the influence of fear; with strong marks of kindness in it, but stronger of dejection.

The furniture, the napkin, knives and forks, and every circumstance denoted the poverty of the man who is my jailor: and his proceedings proved there scarcely could be any guilt from which he would start, to remove this supposed evil. The thought could not escape me, nor the jeopardy in which I should stand, should the money I had in my possession be discovered.—

I ate what was brought me, and endeavoured by the mildness and cheerfulness of my look to inspire the boy with confidence. I have no doubt but he was surprised to see so docile a madman, not having yet ever seen any, and being from description exceeding terrified at the idea of the trade to which he has been forcibly apprenticed. I spoke to him two or three times, apparently to ask him for the trifles
he

he could reach me, but in reality with another view. I likewise addressed him two or three other times in dumbshow, with as much mildness and meaning in my look as circumstances so insignificant would permit.—

The effect my behaviour had upon him was very evident ; and after beginning in fear and confusion, he left me in something like hope and tranquillity. My prison door was locked, the candle taken away, and I left in darkness. I was no more molested during that night.

My thoughts were too busy to suffer me to sleep. I sat without moving I know not how long. The extreme stillness of all around me, added to the unity of the gloom, produced a state of mind which gives wholesome exercise to fortitude. Deep as I was in thought, I remember having been two or three times roused by the sternness of the keeper's voice, which I heard very plainly, and which was generally some command, closing with a curse, and as I supposed directed to the poor boy.

My bed-chamber door was open, and after some time I removed into it, and sat down on the feet of the bed, again falling into reveries which fixed me motionless to the place. I cannot tell what was the hour, nor how long I had been thus seated ; but I was roused by the sound of a door opening, and once more by the voice of the keeper, which I heard so distinctly as to doubt for a moment whether it were not in my own chamber.

At the same time a broad ray of light suddenly struck against the wall of my bedroom. I followed it with my eye : I was still at the foot of the bed, and its direction was from the left to the right. I had much inclination to pull off my shoes, and endeavour to trace by what aperture it entered : but on further reflection, I concluded it would be best not to excite any alarm, in a mind which cannot but be continually tormented by suspicion and fear.

I paid strict attention however to every circumstance that might aid my memory, in tracing it on the morrow.

The

The voice of the keeper, for he spoke several times, was now much more distinct than before : he was going to bed, and the question—"Are you sure all is safe?"—was repeated several times with great anxiety, and was answered in the affirmative by a man's voice—"Do you hear him stir?" said the keeper.—The reply was—"No—But I am sure I heard him a little before ten."

The keeper however could not be satisfied, and in less than five minutes I heard my door unbolting. The keeper and both his men came in with their bludgeons.—He asked morosely why I did not go to bed. I answered because I had no inclination to sleep. He went again to the windows, and examined the very walls with the utmost circumspection ; and afterward turning away said—"Sleep or wake, I'll be d**** if you have any chance."

He then left me, and I presently afterward saw the ray of light again, and heard his various motions at going to bed.

I passed the night without closing my eyes, and in the morning began to examine where it was possible the light should obtain admission. I placed myself in the same situation, and looking to the left saw the closet was in that direction, and that the door was open.

—Looking into it I found that a part of the flooring in the left hand corner, was decayed; and that the ceiling beneath had a fissure of some width.

I thought it a fortunate circumstance that sounds were conveyed so distinctly into my apartments: though I speak chiefly of the bed-chamber; for it was the loudness of the keeper's voice, and the stillness of surrounding objects, which most contributed to my hearing him in the front apartment. Not but the decayed state of the building favoured the conveyance of the sound, in all directions.

I began to consider how far I could improve the means that offered themselves, and, watching my opportunity in the course of the day, with my fingers, and by the

the

the aid of the stick left to stir my fire, I removed some of the decayed mortar to the right and left, and increased the aperture on the inside; but was exceedingly careful not to push any flakes, or part of the ceiling, down into the floor below.—The attention I paid to this was very exact, for it was of the utmost consequence.—Nor was I less accurate in pressing together the rubbish I scraped away into vacant corners between the joists, and leaving no traces that should lead to discovery.

All these precautions were highly necessary, as the behaviour of the keeper had proved; for when he came into my chamber in the morning, as he did early with his customary attendants, he searched and pried about with all the assiduity of suspicion.

At breakfast I was again waited on by the boy, and watched by the keeper. It was necessary I should not excite alarms, in a mind so full of apprehension: I therefore behaved with reserve to the boy, though with great complacency, said little, and dismissed him soon.

In the forenoon the door opened again : the boy was sent in with the straight waistcoat, and the keeper said to me——
“ Come, sir ; put on your jacket !—Here, “ boy, be handy !”—

I once more hesitated, and asked if Mr. Mac Fane were coming to pay me another visit? He did not return me a direct answer, but replied—“ If you will put on “ the jacket, you may go and stretch your “ pins for half an hour in the garden : if “ not, stay where you are, and be d****!”

After a short deliberation, I concluded that to comply was prudent ; and I very peaceably aided the boy in performing his office. As my back was turned to the keeper, I smiled kindly and significantly to the boy ; to which he replied by a look expressive of surprise and curiosity.

It cannot be supposed but that my mind had been most anxiously enquiring into the possibility and means of escape, while in my prison ; and that the moment this unexpected privilege was granted me, its whole efforts were directed to the same subject.

I walked

I walked in the garden overlooked, and and in a certain manner followed by the keeper and his attendants: I therefore traversed it in various directions, without seeming to pay the least attention to the object on which my mind was most busy. But the chance of escape, my hands being thus confined, appeared to be as small in the garden as in the house. It is completely surrounded by a high wall, which joins the house at each end. It had one small gate, or rather door, which was locked and bolted; and had no other entrance, except from the house. After having walked about an hour as I suppose, the keeper asked me, in a tone rather of command than question, if I were not tired. I answered—No. To which he replied, But I am. Accordingly, without saying another word, I returned to my prison.

I will attempt no description of the sufferings of my mind, and the continual fears by which it was distracted: not for myself; for there was no appearance, at this time, that any greater harm than confinement

was intended me, but for another. The subject is torturing: but resignation and fortitude are duties. My reason for mentioning it is that it strongly excited me to some prompt effort at escape.

I could think of none, except of endeavouring to convince the keeper it was more his interest to give me my freedom, than to keep me in confinement. Consequently, when my dinner was brought, and he had taken his station, I asked him if he would do me the favour to converse with me for half an hour; either privately or in the presence of his own men.

He did not suffer me to finish my sentence, but exclaimed — “None of your gab, I tell you! If you speak another word, I’ll have you jacketed: and then b * * * me, my kiddy, if you get it off again in a hurry!”

I said no more, but ate my dinner; casting an eye occasionally to the door, and conjecturing what were the probabilities, by a very sudden spring, of breaking the chain, for he had only put one up, or of
drawing

drawing the staple by which it was held, and which, from the thickness of the wood-work, I knew could not be clenched. It was not possible, I believe, for mind to be actuated by stronger motives than mine was, in my wish to escape: the circumstance of the single chain might not occur a second time, and I determined on the trial.

I prolonged my dinner till I perceived him begin to yawn, and at last turn his head the other way. I was about twelve feet distant from the door. I rose quietly, made two steps, and then gave a sudden spring. I came with great violence against the door, but it resisted me, and, of course, I fell backward.

After the first moment of surprise, the keeper instantly locked the door, and, in a rage of cursing, called his assistants. They however soon pacified him, by turning his attention to the strength of his own fastenings, and scoffing at my fruitless attempt.

But this incident induced him to change his mode; he stood no more with the door

ajar to watch me, but, after sending in the boy, locked and bolted it upon us.

I was in full expectation of the straight waistcoat ; and his forbearance, I imagine, was occasioned by the strict orders he must have received to the contrary. His threat indeed, when I attempted to speak, is a proof rather against this supposition ; and I can solve it no other way than by supposing that his orders were, if I attempted persuasion with him, he would then be at liberty to do a thing to which he seemed exceedingly prone. His fears for himself, should I escape, must inevitably be strong ; and a man, who has waded far enough in error to commit an act so violent, will willingly plunge deeper, in proportion as such fears increase.

The sudden spring I had made at the door, combining with the supposition of madness, had such an effect upon the poor boy that, hearing the door lock, and seeing me as he imagined let loose upon him, his fright returned in full force. His looks were so pale, and he trembled so violently, that

that I feared he would fall into a fit. I went up to him with the utmost gentleness, and said—Don't be afraid, my good boy! Indeed I will not hurt you.

The keeper scarcely staid a minute before, recollecting I had been long enough at dinner, he opened the door again, but with the caution of the three chains, and bade the boy take away.

I then began to accuse myself of precipitancy; but I soon remembered that every thing ought to be hazarded, where every thing is at stake. My fears were not for myself; and while my arms were free, could I have come upon them thus suddenly, success was far from improbable. Vice is always cowardly; and, difference of weapons out of the question, three to one are not invincible odds.

It now first occurred to me how prudent it would be to conceal my bank-bills, and I began to consider which were the best means. I took them out, examined their numbers, and endeavoured to fix them in my memory.

This was no difficult task ; but prudence required that nothing should be left to chance, and I took the burnt end of my flick, and going into the back room, wrote the numbers against the wall, in a place which, from its darkness, was least liable to notice. Indeed I considered there was little to fear, even should the figures I made be seen, for I wrote them in one continued line, which rendered them unintelligible without a key.

I then once more took my chair, and placed it at the closet door ; thinking that to hide them at one corner of the topmost shelf might perhaps be the securest place. I previously began to feel, and, at the far end of the shelf, I put my hand upon something ; which, when brought to light, proved to be the remainder of a bundle of quills.

I felt again, but found nothing more there.

I then removed my chair toward the other end, and after two or three times sweeping my hand ineffectually along the shelf,

shelf, I struck the edge of it against the wall, and more than half a quire of paper fell flat upon it.

This led me to conjecture that the shelf had been a hiding-place, perhaps, to some love-sick girl, and that it was possible there should be ink. After another more accurate search, and turning my other hand, with which I could feel better to the opposite side, I found an ink-bottle.

I took down my treasure, and examined it: there was cotton in the bottle, but the ink was partly mouldy and partly dried away. However, by the aid of a little water, I presently procured more than sufficient to write down my numbers. But I wanted a pen, and for this there was no succedaneum.

As the safest way of preserving what might become useful, I returned my treasure to the shelf on which it had been found; and for that reason began to consider of another place for my bank-notes. After looking carefully round both chambers, I at last lifted up the old picture, and
here

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here

here I found a break in the wainscot ; in which was inserted, laterally, full as much more writing paper as the quantity I had discovered in the closet. I took away the paper entirely, lest, if seen, it should lead to further search ; and, twisting up the bits, laid them so as to be certain of recovering them, when I pleased. The paper I put upon the shelf.

When the boy brought my supper, I asked him his name, how old he was, and other trifling questions, to familiarize and embolden him ; and learned from his answers that he had a poor mother, who was unable to provide for him, and that he had been bound apprentice to this keeper by the parish.

At last I enquired if he could write and read ?

He answered, yes ; he had been called the best scholar of the charity school in which he was bred.

I then asked if he continued to practise his learning ?

He replied, he loved reading very much indeed, but he had no books.

Did

Did he write?

He had no paper.

Was there a pen and ink in the house?

Yes; but the pen was seldom used, and good for nothing.

Could he get me a pen?

If he had but a quill, he could make me one.

Had he a pen-knife?

No; he had forgotten that: but one of the men had a knife with several blades, and he could ask him to lend it.

And what should he write, supposing he had paper?

A letter.

To whom?

To his mother.

I thought it not right to expose my stores to him, and therefore suffered him to go for that time, without saying any thing more on the subject. But my discourse with him had pretty well driven all apprehension from his mind. I was cautious to speak in a very low tone of voice; and, without being bidden, he had acuteness enough to follow my example.

The

The next day, at breakfast, I gave him a sheet of paper, and two quills ; and told him to make pens of them if he could ; one for himself, and the other for me ; and to take the paper for his letter. He looked with intelligent surprise—Where did they come from ? was the question in his thoughts ; but he said nothing. Madmen were beings whom he did not comprehend.

My kindness to him, however, made him desirous to oblige me. I gave him a part of my breakfast ; and he ate what I gave him in a manner that shewed he was not over-fed.

At dinner he brought me both the pens. I asked him why he did not keep one to write to his mother ? He said he had written, but had cleaned and cut the pen over again. They were not ill made, considering that, as he told me, the knife was a bad one.

But what will you do for ink, sir ? said he. I told him I had a little ; but that I should be glad if I had more. Perhaps,
he

he replied, he could get one of the men to bring him a half-pennyworth. I said I had no money, and he answered, a gentleman (Mr. Clifton, I suppose) had just given him sixpence, for holding his horse; that he intended to save it for his mother, but that he would spare a halfpenny to buy me ink.

I took the boy's hand, and said to him—"If ever I live to get free from this place, I will remember you."—The emotions I felt communicated themselves, and he looked sorrowfully up in my face, and asked—"Why, are not you mad, sir?"

The very earnest but mild manner with which I answered—"No, my good fellow"—both convinced him and set his imagination to work.

I said little more, but finished my meal, wrote down my numbers, and gave him the bottle: but warned him, if he were questioned, by no means to tell an untruth. The boy looked at me again, in a manner that spoke highly in his favour, put the bottle in his pocket, and, as soon as his
master

master returned to the door, removed the things and departed.

He brought the ink with my supper. One of the men had taken his sixpence, but refused to return him any change; and the ink he had emptied out of the keeper's bottle. Such are the habits of vice. The boy related it with indignation, but said he dared not complain. I had nothing else to give. I therefore rewarded the generous boy with a couple of quills, and four sheets of paper for his own use; cautioning him to keep them to write to his mother.

While I wanted the means, I imagined it would have been a great relief to have had the power of writing down my thoughts; but I found they were much too busy, and disturbed, by the recollection of Anna St. Ives and her danger, and by the incessant desire of finding some means of escape, notwithstanding a thousand repeated convictions of its impossibility, to suffer me to write either with effect or connection. I did nothing but make memorandums; some of thoughts that occurred, and others
of

of circumstances that were present. I concealed my papers in the wainscot behind the picture, where I mean to leave this narrative.

The indulgence of my morning walk was continued; and on the sixth day of my confinement an incident happened, by which I almost effected my release.

Confiding in the strait waistcoat and in the strength of his locks and bars, and become less apprehensive from this persuasion, the keeper had left me under the care of only one of his men; himself and the other were employed on something which he wanted done in the house.

While they were absent, the garden-bell rang. The voice of Mac Fane was heard, demanding entrance, by the man who was set to watch me, and fetching the key, he opened the gate without hesitation.

My hopes were instantly excited. I made a short turn and crossed him, as if continuing my walk, a few yards distant from the gate. He eyed me however, and I went on; but, the moment he was busied

bused in unlocking and unbolting it, I turned round, sprang forward, and as it opened rushed past.

The violence of my motion overset Mac Fane. The master, whose suspicions had taken the alarm, was entering the garden and saw me. He and his man and Mac Fane instantly joined in the pursuit.

Though I was in the strait waistcoat, yet I happened to be swifter than any of them. The keeper was soon the first in the chase: it was up a narrow lane, with a high-banked hedge on each side. A man was coming down it, and the keeper called to him to stop me. The man seeing my arms confined, and hearing the shouts of my pursuers, endeavoured to do as he was desired. He placed himself directly in my way, and I ran full against him.

We both fell; but the man by the aid of his hands was up rather the soonest. He laid hold of me, and a sudden thought struck me. They were bawling behind—
“A madman! A madman!”—and I as-
fumed

fumed that grinning contortion of countenance which might easiest terrify, uttered an uncouth noise, and began to bite at the man. Terror seized him, and I again got away, the very moment the keeper was coming up.

I had not run a hundred yards further before I saw another man at a distance; and the hue and cry behind was as hot as ever. The hedge in this place was lower, and I jumped over it into the field on my right. There was a ditch on the other side, of which I had no intimation; and my feet alighting on the edge of it, I once more fell.

My pursuers profited by a gate which I had passed. It was the field of a gardener, and a man was at work close by. He came and helped me up; but not soon enough: the keeper arrived, and presently after his man and Mac Fane.

I addressed myself to the gardener, endeavoured to tell him who I was, and said I would give him a hundred pounds, if he would aid me to escape: but my efforts
were

were soon put an end to by the keeper, who threw me down, a second time violently thrust his thumb into my throat, and by gagging me prevented further speech.

Mac Fane however thought proper to give the man half a crown, and they all assured him I was a madman; which story was confirmed by the man who supposed himself bitten, and who had joined in the pursuit.

The extreme malevolence of Mac Fane again displayed itself: but his treatment is unworthy notice, except as it relates to what is to come.

I was hurried back to my prison, left with the strait waistcoat on that whole day and night, and was fed by the boy; who shewed many silent tokens of commiseration, though once more watched by the keeper and his two attendants, with the three chains up at the door. All conversations between me and the boy were for several days ended, by the continued overlooking of the keeper and his men.

After the keeper and Mac Fane had retired,

retired, I went into the back room, and was standing with my face toward the window, which is beside the closet. The behaviour of Mac Fane had been so extraordinary as already to lead me to suspect he had a wish to take away my life.

As I was standing here, I heard the keeper's bed-room door open and shut again, and soon after the voices of him and Mac Fane in conversation. I listened very attentively to a dialogue, the substance of which was to me much more alarming than unexpected. It was a consultation, on the part of Mac Fane, on the policy and means of murdering me.

The keeper opposed him, several times mentioned Mr. Clifton as an unconquerable objection, and urged the danger of being detected; for he did not seem to revolt at the fact.

Mac Fane answered he would silence Clifton; of whom his favourite phrase was that "He should soon do him!"—which he repeated very often, with a variety of uncommon oaths. He even said that,
were

were I fairly out of the way, he could make Edward St. Ives pay him the three thousand guineas.

The curses which Mac Fane continually coupled with my name, and the rancour, the thirst of blood which preyed upon him, were incredible. He a hundred times imprecated eternal damnation to his soul if there were the least danger. The fellows the keeper had with him were of his own providing : they knew he could hang them both : they durst not impeach. [*Squeak*, I recollect, was the word he used.] To take me off was the safest way. Clifton would in reality be an accessary before the fact, and therefore obliged to silence.—Beside—“He would do him ! He would “do him !”—This he confirmed by a new string of oaths.

The keeper however continued averse to the project, said the fellows would hang their own father if he could not bribe them, that there was nothing to be got by putting me out of the way, and that he would not venture his neck unless he saw good cause.

While

While they were arguing the point, a loud and authoritative rap was heard at the keeper's door, accompanied by the voice of Mr. Clifton, demanding admittance. He entered, and the whole story of my escape was related, with that colouring which their own fears inspired.

Mac Fane darkly hinted the thoughts he had been communicating to the keeper; but, meeting repulse from Mr. Clifton whenever ideas of cruelty were started, he thought proper to use more reserve.

The keeper concluded his account by affirming it would be necessary to continue me in the strait waistcoat, and not to let me walk in the garden any more. Mr. Clifton assented to the latter, but positively ordered my arms to be released. There was no need he said to punish me in this manner, and it should not be. At the same time he gave the keeper a twenty pound note, and repeated his orders to treat me properly, but to take care not to suffer me to escape.

Misguided man! How does your heart

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pant

pant after virtue ! How grieve at the slavery in which it is held ! What will its agony be, when the full measure of error is come !

Yet this to me was the lucid moment of hope, for it suggested a train of conclusions which seem like heavenly certainties—Mr. Clifton has made his attempts on Anna St. Ives, and they have been repelled ! Even still, and it is several days since, his efforts continue to be ineffectual !—It must be so !—The purposes of vice are frustrated by the pure energies of virtue : for, had they succeeded, I should be released.—Heart-cheering thought ! Pleasure inexpressible ! Yes, Anna St. Ives is safe !—Truth is omnipotent ; and out of my ashes another, and probably a more strenuous and determined assertor of it, may arise ! Clifton at last may see how very foul is folly, and turn to wisdom ! Would he might be spared the guilt of purchasing conviction at the price of blood !

Three days passed away, after my escape, without any remarkable occurrence.

The

The sanguinary malignity of Mac Fane was more than counterbalanced, by the reasonings of probability and hope in favour of Anna St. Ives.

During my confinement I had slept but little. Wearied however at length, by the repetition of ideas that were unavailing, I was slumbering more soundly than usual on the night after the ninth day ; and was dreaming that my doors were unbolted, the chains rattling, and men entering to murder me ; from which I was waked by starting in my dream to run and resist them. It was the real clanking of the bolts and locks of the house doors that inspired this dream ; they opened to give some one admission. I know not what was the hour, but it must be very late, and it was completely dark. I soon distinguished Mac Fane's voice. I jumped up, hastily dressed myself in part, and presently heard the keeper's door open—The ray of light appeared on the wall—I crept toward the closet.

The first word Mac Fane uttered was—

“ I told you I should do him !—I told you
“ I should do him !”

He kept repeating this and other exclamations, which I could not at first comprehend, closing each of them with oaths expressive of uncommon exultation. But he descanted almost instantly from Mr. Clifton, to whom his phrase alluded, to me ; adding—it was high time now to do me too.

His joy was so great, his oaths so multiplied, and his asseveration so continual, that he would tread me out, would send my soul to hell that very night, and other similar phrases, that it was some time before the keeper could obtain an answer to his question of——“ What does all this mean ?” At last Mr. Mac Fane began to relate, as soberly as the intoxication of his mind would permit, that he had done him [Mr. Clifton] out of ten thousand pounds.

Had he got the money ?

No—But God shiver his soul to flames if he did not make him pay ! He would blow him to powder, drink his blood, eat his bones if he did not !

This

This was not all—He had another prize! Eight thousand pounds! The money was now in the house!

He stopped short—The cupidity of the keeper was excited, and he grew impatient. Mac Fane I imagine hesitated to reconsider if it were possible to get all the money himself, make away with me secretly, and leave the keeper in ignorance. But he could not but conclude this to be impracticable.

I could not sufficiently connect the meaning of all the phrases that followed; they might depend as much on seeing as hearing; but I understood Mac Fane was acquainted with the circumstance of the money I have in my possession; though whether his knowledge were gained from Mr. Clifton or Anna St. Ives, for they were both mentioned, I could not distinguish. He talked much of a letter, of his own cunning, and of the contempt in which he held Mr. Clifton.

The keeper however was convinced of the fact, for he proposed immediately to

murder me, and secure the money.—
This point was for some time debated, and I every moment expected they would leave the room, to perpetrate the crime. Mac Fane had his pistols and cutlafs, yet seemed to suppose a possibility even of my conquering them. The keeper was much more confident—"He knew how to bring me down; he had no fear of that."—Mac Fane remembered his defeat, and the keeper his cheaply bought victory.

They agreed it could not be done silently, unless they could catch me asleep, and the unbolting of the doors would awaken me. They wished the keeper's fellows to know nothing of the matter; they would claim their share.

At last Mac Fane proposed that I should be put in the strait waistcoat the next morning, on pretence of walking me out in the garden; that perhaps it would be best to suffer me to walk there, but not to take off the strait waistcoat any more; that then the doors might be left unbolted, and even unlocked, my arms being confined; and the

the next night they might come and dispatch me!

The conversation continued long after this, and schemes of flight, either to Ireland or the continent, were concerted, and the riches and happiness they should enjoy insisted on, with great self-applause and pleasure. Poor, mistaken men!

They at last parted, with a determination to execute the scheme of the strait waistcoat. Mac Fane took possession of the keeper's bed; and he as I imagine went to that of his men.

And here I must remark that Mac Fane either forgot or did not imagine that my immediate murder would be an impediment to the payment of the ten thousand pound gaming debt, from Mr. Clifton; which fear afterward actuated him strongly. It could not do otherwise, the moment it was conceived.

According to agreement, in the morning the keeper came, with as much pretended kindness as he knew how to assume, to tell me I might have my walk in

the garden again, if I pleased. I answered I did not wish to walk. He endeavoured to persuade me, but he soon found it was to no purpose. He then ordered the boy away, who had brought the strait waistcoat, and quitted his station at the door in great dudgeon.

I soon afterward heard, as I expected, Mac Fane and him in his own room. Mac Fane cursed the keeper bitterly, and supposed that, for want of cunning, he had in part betrayed himself, and rendered me suspicious. The keeper repented his behaviour and cursed again, till I imagined they had fairly quarrelled.

Mac Fane however began to cool, and to talk of another expedient of which he had been thinking. This was to poison me. In this the keeper immediately joined, and began to enquire about the means of procuring the poison. The boy was first mentioned, but that was thought too dangerous. At last Mac Fane determined himself to go to London and buy arsenic, on pretence of poisoning rats and to set off immediately.

immediately. On this they concluded, and presently left the room.

My whole attention was now employed in watching the opening of the keeper's door ; but there was reason to apprehend they would converse somewhere else on their projects. I imagine however they thought this the safest and most inaccessible place, for a little before dark I again heard the voice of Mac Fane, and they presently came back to their former station.

Mac Fane related the difficulty he had found in getting the arsenic ; that several shops had refused him ; and that at last he had succeeded by ordering a quantity of drugs, for which he paid, leaving them to be sent to a fictitious address, and returning back pretended he wanted some poison for the rats, asking them which was the best. They recommended arsenic, which they directed him to make up in balls, and he ordered a quarter of a pound. They weighed it, he put it in his pocket, and they noticed the circumstance, telling him they would send it home with the other

drugs ; but he walked away, pretending not to hear what they said.

Mac Fane, glorying in his own cunning, was impatient to administer his drug, and proposed it should be sent up in my tea. The keeper assented, and the boy very soon afterward brought me some tea in a pot ready made, contrary to custom, I having been used to make my own tea.

The keeper was at the door. I asked him the reason of this deviation ; and he bade me drink my tea and be thankful. I poured some out, first looked at it, then tasted it, and afterwards threw it into the ashes, saying it was bad tea. I next examined the tea-pot, smelled into it, and then dashed it to pieces on the hearth. I looked toward the keeper, and told him there was something in the tea that ought not to have been.

Seeing me take up the candle and begin to move, he instantly shut the door. His conscience was alarmed, and for a moment he forgot the security of his chains. He even called up his men before he
opened

opened it again ; after which the boy was released, but not before I had time to tell him never to eat any thing that was brought for me. The poor boy noticed the significance with which I said it, and fixed his eyes mournfully upon me. I shook him by the hand, bade him be a good boy, and not learn wickedness from his master.

The remains of the tea-set were soon removed, and a fresh consultation presently began in the keeper's room. Mac Fane was again enraged, and blamed the keeper ; who began to suppose there was something supernatural in my behaviour. He said I looked at him as if I knew it was poison, and it was very strange ! Mac Fane swore he would dose me at supper, and would go and make me eat it himself, or blow my brains out ; but he presently recollected I had not the strait waistcoat on, and altered his tone. It was however agreed that another attempt should be made.

I now began to consider all circumstances ; whether it were probable, if I ate a little, that the keeper should suppose

it only a temporary want of appetite; what quantity might be eaten without harm, and if it were not practicable to watch the moment when they should come, by night, to execute their wicked purpose, and to pass them and escape? A little reasoning shewed me that I should be in the dark, in a house the avenues to which were all secured, and with which I was unacquainted; that the number I had to contend with now would be four, three of them provided with bludgeons, and the fourth with a hanger and pistols; that release by the order of Mr. Clifton was not impossible; and that, if I began a fray, I should excite cowardice to action; and, having begun, Mac Fane would scarcely miss such an opportunity.

These reasons made me rather resolve to persevere in fasting; which remedy, though it could not be of long duration, appeared to be the wisest. Yet caution was necessary, for, should I make them absolutely despair of poisoning me, they would have recourse to other means.

My

My resolution was taken, and when the supper came I tasted a bit of bread and drank a small quantity of water, after carefully inspecting it, and without saying any thing more sent the rest away.

The keeper's door soon opened, the ray of light appeared on the wall, and a new consultation succeeded. The keeper again was troubled with superstitious fears; and Mac Fane was persuaded that, having been alarmed at tea-time, I had from suspicion refused to eat any supper.

After a debate, they concluded it would be in vain to attempt to poison me in my tea, for I should detect it: they would therefore send me a short allowance at breakfast, keep me hungry, and prepare my dinner for the next day. The keeper proposed to give me no breakfast, but Mac Fane said that was the way to make me suspect.

They were both highly chagrined; but Mac Fane was much the most talkative at all times, and the loudest in oaths and menaces: though I scarcely think even him a more dangerous man than the keeper.

In

In the morning, observing they had sent agreeable to their plan a small quantity, after a little examination I ate what was brought me, and the keeper retired apparently satisfied.

It was far otherwise at dinner, when I absolutely refused to eat; and their vexation was greatly increased by my persisting to refuse the whole day.

Late at night a new council was held, and it was long in debate whether I should be suffered to live the night out. At last the cupidity of Mac Fane prevailed, and his fear of not getting Mr. Clifton's bond for eleven thousand pounds, as he said, though I understood he had won but ten, seems now to have first struck him; and this induced him to desist. I understood, however, that Mac Fane had still some hopes from his poison, and consequently that to fast would still be necessary.

Their final resolve was that, the moment Mr. Clifton should have given Mac Fane the bond, they would then delay no longer: and from the threats which he
vaunted

vaunted of having used, he expected the bond to be given the next day, when Mr. Clifton was to come to the keeper's, if I understood them rightly, after his visit to Anna St. Ives.

This idea again conjured up torturing images, and fears which no efforts I have been able to make can entirely appease.

I began this narrative the first day on which I found my life was in danger, and have continued it to this time, which is now the twelfth day of my confinement. The desire which the keeper expresses to possess himself of the money convinces me of my great jeopardy. He was eager to have committed the murder last night, during the last conversation I heard. That I should escape with life from the hands of these wicked men is but little probable; but I will not desert myself; I will not forward an act of blood by timidity. Were I to destroy the bank-bills, and to tell them they were destroyed, I should not be believed. I mean to try another expedient—I hear them in the keeper's room!

These

These are the last words I shall ever write. They are determined on immediate murder—But I will sell my life dearly.

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LETTER CXXVI.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES
TO
LOUISA CLIFTON.

OH my friend! I am escaped! Have broken my prison and am sitting now—I cannot tell you where, but in a place of safety. I have been thus successful by the aid of Laura.

It is now four days since I saw your brother. Lulled to security by the peace-
able

able manner in which I had submitted to confinement, and imagining Laura to be still in the interest of Mr. Clifton, though this silly girl is now a very sincere penitent, the old woman began to indulge her in still greater liberties. I warned Laura very seriously against any precipitate attempts, for I saw it was probable this incautioness would increase, provided it were encouraged.

No good opportunity offered till this morning, when Laura was suffered to take the key of my prison chamber, and let herself in and out.

The moment she told me of it, I enquired what other obstacles there were. Laura said we might get into the yard, but no further, for there was a high wall which no woman could climb. I asked her if she thought a man could climb it? She answered yes, she had seen men do such things, but she could not think how.

The absence of Mr. Clifton for so long a time, without releasing me from my imprisonment, made me in hourly expectation

tion of his return. I therefore did not stay to hesitate, but desired Laura to steal down stairs before me, and open the door, for that I was determined to attempt the wall.

Laura was terrified at the fear of being left behind, for she said she never could climb it. "Alas! What was to become of her?"—I told her she should have thought of consequences long ago; but that she might be certain I would not desert her: on the contrary, I would go to the first house I could find and send her relief, if I should happen to climb a wall which she could not. Though, I likewise added, it was weakness and folly to suppose that men were better able to climb walls than women, or that she could not follow, if I could lead.

The assurance of relief in part quieted her fears: she opened the first door, stole down to the second, I followed, she unlocked it, and we both got into the yard.

The wall, as she said, was high and not easily climbed; but I had little time for reflection: the old woman saw us through the window, and was coming.

To

To this wall there was a gate, equally high, but with a handle to shut, ledges running across, and two or three cracked places that afforded hold for the hand. You and I, Louifa, have often discoursed on the excellence of active courage, and the much greater efforts of which both sexes are capable than either of them imagine. I climbed the gate with great speed and little difficulty.

The old woman was already in the yard, and Laura stood wondering to see me on the top of the wall, fearing I should now break my neck in getting down again, and still in greater terror at the approach of the old woman. I made some attempt to persuade the latter to give Laura her liberty; but our turnkey is very deaf, and instead of listening to me, she ran for some offensive weapon to beat me off the wall: so, once more assuring Laura I would send her immediate aid, and keeping hold of the gate post with my hand, I let myself down and with very little hurt.

I proceeded along a narrow lane; I
knew

knew not in what direction, but hurried forward in great haste ; not only from the possibility of being pursued, but because it began to blow and rain very heavily. In less than ten minutes I came to a house ; I rang, a man came to the gate, and I readily gained admission.

I was shewn into the room where I am now writing, and another person was sent to me, who perhaps is the master of the house, though from his appearance I should rather suppose the contrary. I asked first if it were possible to get a coach ; and he enquired where I came from ? I told him, from a house at a considerable distance, in the same lane, where I had been forcibly shut up, and where my maid still was, whom I wished to have released ; adding I would well reward any two men, by whom it might easily be effected, if they would go and help her over the wall.

He listened very attentively, stood some time to consider, and then replied there was no coach to be procured within a mile of the place, but that a man should go for one ;

one ; and that I might make myself easy concerning the young woman (Laura) for she should soon join me. The look and manner of the man did not please me, but the case was urgent, the storm increasing, and I in want of shelter and protection.

I then recollected it would perhaps be safest to write immediately to Grosvenor-Street, to prevent surprise as well as to guard against accidents, and I asked if he could furnish me with a sheet of paper and pen and ink. He answered he feared not, but called a boy, and said to him—" Did not I see you with " some writing paper the other day?" The boy answered yes ; and he bade him go and fetch it, and bring me the pen and ink.—

He then left me, and the boy presently returned, with a sheet of paper, an old ink-bottle, and a very indifferent pen.— The boy looked at me earnestly, and then examined the pen, saying it was a very bad one, but he would fetch me a better.

The man who was just gone had told
me

me that nobody could be spared, to go as far as I required, in less than an hour at the soonest ; I therefore have time to write at length.

I think there can be little doubt but that my Louisa is long before this in Grosvenor-Street. I would not wish Sir Arthur to be informed too suddenly, I will therefore direct to her at a venture ; but for fear of accidents, will add to the direction——
“ If Miss Clifton be not there, to be opened and read by Mrs. Clarke.”—In the present alarmed state of the family this will ensure its being opened, even if both my good friends should be absent.

Good heaven ! What does this mean ?
—I have just risen to see if the little boy were within call, and find the door is locked upon me !

I have been listening !—I hear stern and loud voices !—I fear I have been very inconsiderate !—I know not what to think !

Where

Where am I?—Oh, Louisa, I am seized with terror! Looking into the table-drawer at which I am sitting, in search of wafers, I have found my own letter; opened, dirted, and worn! Alas! You know of no such letter!—Again I am addressing myself to the winds!—The very fatal letter in which I mentioned the eight thousand pounds!—Where am I, where am I?—In what is all this to end?

All is lost!—Flight is hopeless!—The very man who headed the ruffians that seized me has just walked into the room, placed himself with his back against the door, surveyed me, satisfied himself who it was, then warily left me, locked the door, and called a man to guard it!—Oh my incautious folly!—

I am in the dwelling of demons!—I never heard such horrible oaths!—Surely there is some peculiar mischief working!—The noise increases, with unheard of blasphemy!

Merciful Heaven ! I hear the voice of
Frank !—What is doing ?—Must I re-
main here ?—Oh misery !—What cries !—

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LETTER CXXVII.

COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

London, Dover Street.

ALL is over, Fairfax !—I am just
brought from the scene of blood !—You
see this is not my hand-writing—My hand
must never write more—But I would em-
ploy the little strength I have, in relating
“ the last scene of this eventful history.”—
My sister is my amanuensis. These surgi-
cal medlers issued their edict that I should
not speak ; but they found I could be as
obstinate

obstinate as themselves: I would not suffer a probe to be drawn at me till I had written, for when they begin I expect it will soon be over.

I remember I ended my last at the very minute I was about to mount my horse.—It was a wintery day. The rain fell in sheets, and the wind roared in my face.—My pistols were charged and locked in my pocket.

I rode full speed, but I sat off too late! When I approached the madhouse, I heard the most piercing shrieks and cries of murder!—They mingled with the storm, in wild and appalling horror!—I rang violently at the bell!—A ready and an eager hand soon flew to open the gate—It was Anna St. Ives!—A boy shewed her the way—It was her cries and his, mingled with the blasphemies of the wretches above, which I had heard!

Her first word again was murder!——
“Fly! Save him, save him!”—

I rushed forward—The noise above stairs was dreadful—I blundered and missed the

stairs, but the terrified boy had run after me to shew me. I heard two pistols fire as I ascended—The horror that struck my heart was inconceivable!—A fellow armed with a bludgeon was standing to guard the door. My pistols were unlocked and ready: I presented and bade him give way—He instantly obeyed—I made the lock fly and entered!—The first object that struck my sight was Frank, besmeared with blood, a discharged pistol in his hand, defending himself against a fellow aiming blows at him with a bludgeon, Mac Fane hewing at him with a cutlass, and the keeper, who had just been shot, expiring at his feet!

I fired at Mac Fane——My shot took place, though not so effectually but that he turned round, made a stab at me, and pierced the abdomen almost to the spine. But he had met his fate; and the return he made was most welcome!—He fell, and the remaining antagonists of Frank immediately fled.

Frank is living but dreadfully hacked
by

by the villain Mac Fane. They tell me his life is safe, and that his wounds are deep, but not dangerous. Perhaps they mean to deceive me. If so their folly is extreme, and their pity to me ill placed. I well know I deserve no pity.

With respect to myself, my little knowledge of surgery teaches me that a wound so violent, made with a cutlass in such a part, must be mortal. But mortality to me is a blessing. To live would indeed be misery. Torments never yet were imagined equal to those I have for some time endured; but, though I have lived raving, I do not mean to die canting. Take this last adieu therefore, dear Fairfax, and do not because you once esteemed me endeavour to palliate my errors. Let my letters to you do justice to those I have injured.—To have saved his life who once saved mine, is a ray of consolation to that proud swelling heart, which has sometimes delighted to confer, but has always turned averse from the receiving of obligations.—I would have been more circumstantial in

my narrative, were it not for the teasing kindness of my sister.

Once more, and everlastingly, adieu!

C. CLIFTON.

P. S. ADDED BY LOUISA CLIFTON.

As to a friend of my brother, sir, I have taken the liberty to delay sending the letter, till his wound has been examined.—The surgeons are divided in their judgment. Two of them affirm the wound is mortal; the third is positive that a cure is possible; especially considering the youth and high courage of the patient, on which he particularly insists. I dare not indulge myself too much in hope: I merely state opinion. Neither dare I speak of my own sensations. Of the worth of a mind like that of Mr. Clifton, you, sir, his friend and correspondent, cannot be ignorant.—The past is irrevocable; but hope always smiles on the future. Should he recover!—Resignation becomes us, and time will quickly relieve us from doubt.

L. CLIFTON.

LET-

LETTER CXXVIII.

ANNA WENBOURNE ST. IVES

TO

MRS. WENBOURNE.

Grosvenor-Street.

I RETURN you my sincere thanks, dear madam, for your kind congratulations: and think myself honoured by the great joy you express, at my safety and the deliverance of Mr. Henley. I will not attempt to describe my own feelings; they are inexpressible; but will endeavour to obey your commands, and give you the best account I am able of all that has befallen us.

For this purpose, I inclose the narrative written by Mr. Henley during his confinement; and three letters addressed to my friend, Louisa, but never sent; with a

copy of a letter dictated by Mr. Clifton to his friend, Mr. Fairfax. To these be pleased to add the following particulars of what passed after Mr. Henley's narrative breaks off, and the sudden interruption of my third letter by terror.

Mr. Henley heard but had not time to write their last consultation. It was the eagerness of the keeper which overcame the reluctance of Mac Fane to the murder, till he should have procured the bond of Mr. Clifton. The keeper was violent: he had bargained with his two men to assist in the murder, for fifty pounds each: and he told Mac Fane, if he would not consent, they would proceed without him, and he should have no share of the eight thousand pounds.

This argument had its effect, Mac Fane had some doubts relative to the money won of Mr. Clifton; and four thousand pounds was a temptation not to be resisted.

Mr. Henley omitted mentioning a circumstance that occurred of some moment, because he did not know the meaning of it.

it. Probably they had planned it out of his hearing. The day before the attack, the keeper returned him his watch and purse, with the same sum, but not, as Mr. Henley thinks, the same pieces, it contained when delivered. The purpose of this, it appears, was to make him believe the keeper a man of his word.

On the morning of the intended murder, previous to the assault, the keeper came up to Mr. Henley; but not into the room. He talked to him with the usual security of his chains, and proposed that Mr. Henley should deliver up the bank-bills, which the keeper now told him he knew to be in his possession; with a promise that they should be returned, as the watch and purse had been.

An artifice so shallow was not likely to impose on Mr. Henley. He had determined how to act, relative to the bank bills, and answered it was true they were in his possession; but that he would not deliver them to the keeping of any other. Immediately after this repulse, the keeper,

Mac Fane, and the two attendants ascended.

The keeper (I speak after Mr. Henley) was much the most confident, and seemed chiefly fearful that Mr. Henley should slip by them. He therefore stationed one of his men at the outside of the door, which he ordered him to lock and guard. Himself, Mac Fane, and the other entered the room ; the keeper and the man each with a bludgeon, and Mac Fane with a pair of pistols and his cutlass hanging by his side.

Mr. Henley had purposely kept up a good fire, and had the bank bills in his hand. He bade them keep off a moment, as if he wished to parley ; and they, desirous of having the bills quietly, remained where they were. Mr. Henley then took the bills one by one, repeating the amount of each to convince them that the whole sum was there, and then suddenly thrust them into the fire. They all rushed forward to save them, and this was the lucky moment on which Mr. Henley seized the two arms of Mac Fane, who, on account
of

of his weapons, was the principal object, and who, intending to fire at him, in the struggle shot the keeper. The other pistol Mr. Henley wrested from him, during which contest it went off, but without doing mischief.

Mac Fane then drew his hanger, and made several cuts at Mr. Henley, who was attacked on the other side by the keeper's man.

In the heat of this conflict Mr. Clifton arrived; and what then followed, his letter will inform you.

It is necessary I should now say a word of myself, and of the small part which I had in this very dreadful affair. And here I must remind you of the boy, so often mentioned in Mr. Henley's narrative; for to him, perhaps, we all owe our safety.—At least, had it not been for him, Mr. Clifton could not certainly have gained admission.

The poor fellow heard and saw enough to let him understand some strange crime was in agitation. He has great acuteness

and sensibility : he looked at me when I first came, in a very significant manner, and would have spoken had he dared.

The door of the room in which I was shut was both locked and bolted ; but the man that was set to guard it was wanted for a more blood-thirsty purpose.

I need not inform you how much my fears were alarmed, the moment I found myself in the custody of the man by whom I had at first been seized. But how infinitely was my terror increased when I heard the voice of Frank, which I did very distinctly, and presently afterward of the horror about to be committed ! My shrieks were incessant ! The poor boy heard them, and though shrieking with terror almost as violent as my own, yet had the presence of mind to come and set me free.

Mr. Clifton's ringing was heard at the same moment. The top bolt of the gate was high, and I opened it with difficulty ; but despair lent me force. It certainly could not have been opened time enough by the boy.

Of

Of this and the following scene, and of the agonizing sensations that accompanied them, I will attempt no further description. I will now only relate by what means, and whose aid, we left this house of horror.

You know, madam, with what activity my dear Louisa exerted herself, and employed every expedient in her power.— You are likewise acquainted with the zeal of Mrs. Clarke, her niece Peggy, and the two men, her husband and brother.— Their ardour increased rather than abated.

Mr. Webb, whose watchings and efforts were incessant, saw Mac Fane step out of a hackney-coach into the shop where Mr. Clifton lodges. This I understand to have happened on the ninth evening of my confinement. It was natural that this circumstance should immediately excite suspicion and alarm. The coach was dismissed, Mac Fane remained, and Mr. Webb continued hovering about the door, waiting in expectation of seeing him come out, till two o'clock in the morning, but waiting in vain: after which, concluding that he had missed him, he quitted his post.

On the morrow, by very diligent enquiry, he found out Mac Fane's lodgings ; but he had not been at home all night. The same ineffectual search was continued during that and the next day ; but, on the morning of deliverance, Mr. Webb met a person with whom he had formerly been acquainted, who told him of the house hired by the keeper, and mentioned the names of his two assistants, with rumours and surmises sufficiently dark and unintelligible, but enough to make Mr. Webb suppose it was possible the persons he was in search of were there confined.

The intelligence was immediately brought to Louisa and Sir Arthur, and application as immediately made to the magistracy. Webb had obtained very accurate information of the site of the house ; and, what was more effectual, had prevailed on his informer to lend his aid.

The relief he bought, though too late to prevent mischief, was not wholly useless : Mr. Clifton was the first object of

our

our care; for Mr. Henley, though bruised, cut, and mangled, has received no serious injury. Laura was likewise sent for and relieved from her prison. Proper conveyances were soon provided, and we all removed as fast as possible from this scene of horror.

You may be sure, madam, we did not forget to bring the boy with us. Mr. Henley has an affection for him, which the poor fellow very sincerely returns; and finds himself relieved from the most miserable of situations, and placed in the most happy.

That I may wholly acquit myself of the task I have undertaken, I must just mention the Count de Beaunoir. He is a gentleman of the most pleasant temper. Urbanity is his distinctive mark, for in this quality most of his flights originate. He has thought himself my admirer, but in reality he is the general admirer of whatever he supposes excellent. When he was told of my being affianced to Mr. Henley, instead of expressing chagrin, he broke
into

into raptures at our mutual happiness, and how much it was merited. He does not seem to understand the selfishness of jealousy.

Perhaps, madam, you have not heard the last accounts of the physical gentlemen, relative to Mr. Clifton. The surgeon who first gave hope is now positive of a cure; and his opponents begin to own it is not impossible, but they will not yet allow that Mr. Clifton is out of danger.

The Count de Beaunoir has paid Mr. Clifton the utmost attention; he visits him twice a day, and, according to the accounts my friend gives me, infuses a spirit of benevolence and affection into his visits which are highly honourable to his heart. Indeed I and Mr. Henley have several times met him there: for you may well imagine, madam, we are not the least attentive of Mr. Clifton's visitors. It is at present the sole study of Mr. Henley, which way best to address himself to a heart and understanding so capable of generous sensations, and noble energies.—

There

There is an attachment to consistency in the human mind, which will not admit of any sudden and absolute change ; it must be gradual ; but thus much may with certainty be said, Mr. Clifton does not at present, and I hope will never again, treat with complacency those vindictive but erroneous notions which had so nearly proved destructive to all. He makes no professions : but so much the better ; he thinks them the more strongly. His mind preserves its usual tone ; is sometimes disturbed even to excess, and bitterly angry, almost to phrensy, at its own mistakes ; but has lost none of those quick and powerful qualities, by which it is so highly distinguished.

Sir Arthur, madam, has desired me to communicate a circumstance, which I shall readily do, without the false delicacy of supposing that I am not the proper person. It is agreed between him and Mr. Abimelech Henley, that the marriage between me and Mr. Frank Henley shall take place in a month ; to which I thought
it

it my duty to assent. I am sorry, madam, that Lord Fitz-Allen should continue to imagine his honour will be sullied by this marriage: but I am in like manner sorry for a thousand follies, which I daily see in the world, without having the immediate power of correcting one of them.

A. W. ST. IVES.

LETTER CXXIX.

COKE CLIFTON

TO

GUY FAIRFAX.

London, Dover Street.

IT is not to be endured! They drive me mad! I will not have life thus palmed upon me! There is neither kindness nor justice in it. I will hear no more of duty, and philanthropy, and general good! I

am

am all fiend!—Hell-born!—The boon companion of the foulest miscreants the womb of sin ever vomited on earth!—The arm in arm familiar of them!—In the face of the world!—This it is to be honorable!—I—I am a man of honour, a despiser of peasants, an assertor of rank!—

Day after day, hour after hour, here I lie, rolling, ruminating on ideas which none but demons could suggest; haunted by visions which devils only could conjure up! And with me to live? Where is the charity of that? Angels though they be, they have made me miserable! I know I have injured them; I don't deny it. Say what they will, they cannot forgive me—Shall I ask it?—No!—Hell should not make me! I will have no more favours; I am loaded too much already.

For it cannot be true!—Their hearts can feel no kindness for me!—Oh!

I have lost her!—For ever lost her!—Yet even this deep damnation I could bear, I think I could, had I not made myself so very foul and detestable a villain!

—It

—It is intolerable!—The rage of cannibals to mine is patience! I could feed on human hearts; my own the first and sweetest morsel!

Well, well!—Her I have lost; him I have injured!—Injured?—Arrogance, outrage, contempt, blows, imprisonment, and murder!—These are the damning injuries I have done him!—I took greatness upon me; I mimicked tyranny, and pretended to inflict large vengeance for petty affronts! I trusted in wiles, and imagined mind might be caught in a net!

Lo how the adder egg of vanity can brood in its own dunghill, and hatch itself to persecution, rape, and murder!—Lo how Guilt and Folly couple, and engender darkness to hide their own deformity!—The picture is mine!—Black, midnight rape, and blood red murder!—A horrid but indubitable likeness.

There are but two ways, either to live
and

and pursue revenge, or to die and forget it. Of the pursuit I am weary. I have had a full meal of villainy, and am glutted: its foulness is insufferable, and I turn from it loathing. Then welcome death! Again it would have fought me, but for their eternal officiousness. It is in vain. There are swords, pistols, and poison still. Life has a thousand outlets: and to live, knowing what I know and never can forget, would be rank and hateful cowardice!—I am determined. I will listen to their glosses no more. Persuasion is vain, and soothing mockery.

Yet one act of justice I will perform before I die. Send me my letters, Fairfax. They shall see me in my native colours!—Send them directly!—There is consolation in the thought—They have dared to shew letters that exposed them to persecution and malice—I will shew what shall expose me to contempt and hatred!—Let them equal me if they can—I am Clifton!—Inimitable in absurdity, in vice damnable!—

Take

Take copies if you will. Proclaim me to the world! Read them in coffee-houses, nail them up at the market-cross!—Let boys hoot at me, and trulls and drabs pluck me by the beard!—What can they?—It is I, myself, who hold the scorpion whip!—'Tis memory! What! Envy, rage, revenge, hatred, rape and murder, all possessing one man?—Poor creature! Poor creature!—Pity him, Fairfax!—Pity?—Ask pity?—Despise him! Trample on him! Spit in his face!

C. CLIFTON.

LETTER CXXX.

FRANK HENLEY

TO

OLIVER TRENCHARD.

London, Grosvenor-Street.

HOW violent and reiterated are the conflicts, between truth and error, in every mind of ardour!—And, of all errors, the love of self is the most rooted, the least easy to detect, and supremely difficult to eradicate.

eradicate. We can pardon ourselves any thing, except a want of self-respect; but that is intolerable.

I described, in my last*, the dissatisfied state of mind of Mr. Clifton. But, while he imagined he should soon lose all memory of a scene become so irksome to him, his dissatisfaction was trifling, compared to what it is at present. Repugnant as the idea was to his habitual feelings, still I have more than half convinced him that suicide is an act as cowardly as it is criminal. Yet to live and face the world, loaded as he imagines with unpardonable crimes and everlasting ignominy, is a thing to which he knows not how to consent. To combat this new mistake, into which he has fallen, has for some time past been my chief employment. No common efforts could assuage the turbulence of his tempestuous soul. Energy superior even to his own was necessary, to subject and calm this perturbation. But, in the simplicity of truth, this energy was easy to be found: it is from self-distrust, confusion or cowardice, if it ever fail.

I have

* Omitted.

I have just left him, and our conversation will give you the best history of his mind, which is well worthy our study. I found him verging even toward delirium, and a fever coming on, which if not impeded might soon be fatal. He keeps his bed : but instead of lying at his ease, he remained raised on his elbow, having just finished a letter to his friend. Louisa had described the state of his mind, and I resolved to catch its tone, that I might the more certainly command his attention. Without preface, and as if continuing a chain of reasoning, he addressed me ; with his eye fixed, in all the ardour of enquiry.

What is man ?—What are his functions, qualities, and uses ?—Does he not sleep trembling, live envying, and die cursing ?—And is this worth aught ?—Is it to be endured ?—Why do I suffer life thus to be imposed upon me ?—

It is not suffering : or, if it be, such sufferings are of our own creation.—To the virtuous and the wise, life is joy and bliss.

Perhaps so—Wisdom there may be, and truth

truth and virtue. And, for the virtuous and the wise, the full stream of pleasure may richly flow : but not for me ! Pretend not that I may walk with the gods ! I, who have been the inmate of fiends ! I, who proposed glory to myself from the most contemptible of pursuits ! I, who could dangle after coquettes and prudes ; feed on and inflate myself with the baubles of a beauty's toilette ; and, in the book of vanity, inscribe myself a great hero, a mighty conqueror, for having heaped ridicule on the ridiculous ; or brought innocence to shame, misery, and destruction ! And this I did with a light and vain heart ! Did it laughing, boasting, exulting ! Satanic dog ! Pest of hell ! What ! Stretch souls on the rack, and then grin and mock at them for lying there ! 'Tis the sport of devils, and by devils invented !

Your present indignation is honourable both to your heart and understanding.

Oh, flatter me not !—Vain, supercilious coxcomb !—I spread my wings, crowed in conceit, threatened, resolved, laughed at opposition, and kicked the world before me !

me!—Oh, it was who but I;—And what was it I proposed?—Fair conquest?—Honourable opposition?—No!—It was treachery, covert malice, and cowardly conspiracy!—A league with hell-dogs!—Horrible, blood-thirsty villains!—And baffled too; defeated, after all this infernal enginery! Nay, had I been so wholly devil as to have joined in murder, what would have followed? Why they would next have murdered me; and for the justice of the second murder would have hoped pardon, even for the hell-born guilt of the first!

Do not, while you detest and shun one crime, plunge into a greater. This agony is for having been unjust to others; you are now still more unjust to yourself. You will not suppose yourself capable of a single virtue; yet, in your most mistaken moments, you never could be so illiberal to your enemies.

Would you persuade me I am not a most guilty, foul, and hateful monster!—Oh be more worthy of yourself, avoid me, detest me, curse me!

I will answer when you are more calm.

Calm? Never, while this degraded being shall continue, shall such a moment come!

—I calm? Sleeping or waking, I at peace? I pardon hypocrisy, treachery, blows, bruises, prisons, chains, poison, rape and murder? Ministers of wrath descend, point here your flaming swords, annihilate all memory of what manhood and honour were, and fit me for the society of the damned!

Forbear!—(Never before did I address him in such a voice—The last dreadful word of his sentence was drowned, by my stern and awful violence; which reason dictated as the only means of recalling his maddening thoughts, from the despair and horror into which they were hurrying.—I continued)—Frantic man, forbear! Recall your wild spirits, and command them to order. How long will you suffer this petty slavery? How long shall the giant rage, and expend his strength, in tearing up stubble and rending straws?—Stretch forth your hand, and grasp the oak—Labours worthy of your Herculean mind await and invite you. Away to the

temple of Error; shake its pillars, and make its foundation totter!—Be yourself. —Shall the soaring eagle swoop at reptiles, the prey of bats and owls?

Do not mock me with impossible hopes —What! Have you not held the mirror up to me, and shewn me my own hatefulness?

Are you a man? Will you never shake off this bondage? Oh it is base! it is beneath you! Of what have you been guilty? Why of ignorance, mistakes of the understanding, false views, which you wanted knowledge enough, truth enough, to correct. Have not many of the godlike men whom we admire most been guilty, in their youth, of equal or of greater errors?—Thus, alas, it happens that minds of the highest hope, and most divine stamp and coinage, are cut off daily! swept away by that other grand mistake of mankind—“Exemplary punishment is necessary”—So they say—But no—’Tis exemplary reformation! Can the world be better warned by a body in gibbets, than by the active virtues of a once misguided but now enlightened understanding? The gibbet
2 will

will remain an object of terror to the traveller, who dreads being robbed and murdered : but an incitement to despair, in the mind of the murderer?—Banish then these black pictures from your mind, by which it continues darkened and misled ; and in their stead behold a soul inspiring prospect, of all that is great and glorious, rising to your view ! Feel yourself a man ! Nay you shall feel it, in your own despite ! A man capable of high and noble actions !

Here, Oliver, I at this time left him. His eye remained fixed, and he was silent ; but its wildness was diminished : the frown of his brow disappeared, and his countenance became more clear. Such associations as these tokens denoted ought not to meet interruption. However I took care to return in less than an hour ; fearful lest he should decline into his former gloom, which was little short of phrensy. I had been fortunate enough to reduce his discordant feelings to something like harmony : and the moment I entered his room the second time he exclaimed—

You are a generous fellow ! a magnanimous fellow ! You can work miracles ! —I know you of old—Can bring the dead to life !—Can almost persuade me that even I, by living, may now and then effect some trifling, pitiful good ; may snatch some of the remnants, the offals of honour—But aught eminent, aught worthy of—

Be calm

No ! It cannot be forgotten, or forgiven ! —Cruel, malignant, remorseless wretch !

Can you speak thus of the present ?—You know you cannot !—And wherefore unjustly insist on the past ? Be firm ! Conquer this pride of heart !

Why, ay—Pride of heart !—It is the very damning sin of my soul !

Exorcise the foul fiend then, and in its stead give welcome to firm but unassuming self-respect. Arise ! Shake torpor from you, and feel your strength ! It is Atlean ; made to bear a world ! Cherish life, and become worthy of yourself ! What ! Would you kill a mind so mighty ? Do you not feel it now ; possessing you, emanating, flaming, bursting to spread itself ?

Why

Why, that were something !—Could I but once again get into my own good liking—! You are a strange fellow !—You will not hate me ! Nay, will not suffer me to hate myself !—Damnation ! To be cast at such an immense distance ! Oh it is intolerable ! It is contemptible !—But I will have my revenge !—Some how or another I will have my revenge ! And, since hate must not be the word, why—— ! But no matter—I will have no more vaunting—Yet, if I do not—— ! I have had a glimpse, and begin to know you—The soul of benevolence, of tenderness, of attention, of love, of all the divine faculties that make men deities, infuses itself and pervades you—Had I but been wholly fool, I had been but partly villain—But I !—Oh monstrous !—The fiends with whom I was leagued to me were angels !

Why, ay ; contemplate the picture, but do not forget it is that of a man you once knew, who is now no more. He has disappeared, and in his stead an angel of light is come !

Stop !—Go not too fast !——I promise
nothing

nothing—Mark that!—I promise nothing—Do not imagine I am now in the feverish repentance of white wine whey—You would have me stay in a world which I myself have rendered hateful—I will think of it—I know your arts—You would realize the fable of Pygmalion, and would infuse soul into marble!

There is no need; you have a soul already; inventive, capacious, munificent, sublime!

Ay, ay—I know—You have a choice collection of words.

A soul of ten thousand! Nay, an army of souls in one!

And must I submit? Are you determined to make a rascal like me admire, and love, and give place to all the fine affections of the heart?

Ay, determined!

Oh, sister!—(Louisa at this moment entered.) To you too I have behaved like a scoundrel! A tyrant! A petulant, ostentatious, imperious braggart!

You mistake! replied Louisa, eagerly. You mistake! You are talking of a very different

different man! A being I could not understand. You are my brother!—My brother!—I have found the way to your heart! Will make it all my own! Will twine myself round it! Shake me off if you can!

The energy with which she spoke, and looked, and kissed him, was irresistible!—He was overpowered: the tears gushed to his eyes, but he repressed them; he thought them unmanly; and, seeing his medical friend enter, exclaimed—I have surgeons for the body, and surgeons for the mind, who cut with so deep yet so steady a hand that they take away the noxious, and leave the sound to suppurate and heal!

Can we do less? said I. Ours is no common task! We are acting in behalf of society: we have found a treasure, by which it is to be enriched. Few indeed are those puissant and heavenly endowed spirits, that are capable of guiding, enlightening, and leading the human race onward to felicity! What is there precious but mind? And when mind, like a dia-
mond

mond of uncommon growth, exceeds a certain magnitude, calculation cannot find its value !

I once more left him ; and never did I quit the company of human being, no not of Anna St. Ives herself, with a more glowing and hoping heart. But why describe sensations to thee, Oliver, with which thou art so intimately acquainted ? To bid thee rejoice, to invite thee to participate in felicity, which may and must so widely diffuse itself, were equally to wrong thy understanding and thy heart.

F. HENLEY.

THE END.